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Foreign Affairs Series

DAVID M. EVANS

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Evans prior to his death]

Q: Could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family?

EVANS: I was born in Philadelphia in 1936. My family is an old Philadelphia family, some of them having come over on the second voyage of William Penn in 1684. I have always been very proud of coming from Philadelphia. I still keep my legal residence there. But I also decided in high school that I didn't want to stay in Philadelphia. My family pressure was to be a Philadelphia lawyer, go to the University of Pennsylvania. I was proud of being from Philadelphia, but I didn't want to stay in Philadelphia. I decided I wanted to be a diplomat and work in foreign affairs and the diplomatic service, around when I was in the 10th grade.

Q: Tell me a bit about your family, your parents. What were they like?

EVANS: My mother and father were both artists. Both went to one of the Philadelphia design schools and we were from a very good family. My father was not tremendously wealthy, but my mother was particularly interested in my education. She saw to it that I went to a private school The Germantown Friends School, where I was for 13 years, and began as a kindergartner. My maternal grandfather was a very important figure in my life. He retired as a Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad. From him I learned most of the things a young man would learn about the real world and the business world, and the love to travel because he traveled a lot for the railroad. This is before the trucking business came into being. So, railroads and shipping were the major forms of commerce, both national and international. He was the international head of that. He opened up and developed a port in Poland, for example, and had many interesting stories dealing with the Nazis in the 1930s. He was one of the first people who signaled to the White House that World War II was coming. So, I was very much influenced by him. I was fortunate enough to have another grandfather who was an educator. My father's father, was an educator for one of the major high schools in Philadelphia, Central High School. I learned a lot about nature from him and the love of education. I feel very blessed to have the family that I did. My father, unfortunately, died when I was 22. I was only a child. That is it in a nutshell.

Q: What field of art was your father and mother in?

EVANS: My father was in advertising. As an art executive, he worked for, and was at one time also the President of the Art Director's Association in Philadelphia. He and my mother moved in a pretty elevated artistic and cultural scene in Philadelphia. While I was growing up, there were a lot of parties and exhibitions. Their friends were all professionals, either other artists or doctors. Some people grow up with investment bankers, businessmen. My immediate family's friends were all professionals, and most, as I say, in the arts or the medical field.

Q: What about college?

EVANS: I went to Harvard. Our class of 1964 at Germantown Friends, was, I must say, in retrospect, a very solid class. We sent five students, of course at that time, they were all men, to Harvard. I was one of those five. I had considered Haverford, as well, but my best friend persuaded me to apply to Harvard. I did, without even telling my parents. I got accepted and they were quite thrilled and pleased when that happened. That was one of the most important events. You know, there are seminal events along one's road of life, and certainly for me, going to Harvard was a tremendously seminal event. If I had gone to Haverford, things would have probably been a lot different.

Q: You said that in about the 10th grade diplomacy struck you. Is there any particular reason for that?

EVANS: Well, let me also mention two factors that are relevant to my whole career story, if I may. One was the sense of service. Although, I, myself, was not a Quaker, I was nevertheless very influenced by the Quaker commitment to public service. I think that combined with my love of languages. I was a Latin scholar throughout high school and, indeed, when I first went to college. I was initially going to major in Latin until I decided to go for Russian. So it was my love of languages, my grandfather's influence, particularly of all his travel. I had seen all the pictures, letters, and stories of his travel. That combined with the school's sense of public service, all coalesced into a feeling that, I really didn't want to spend my whole life in Philadelphia.

A complicating factor, though, was a very fierceless streak of independence that began in school and continued and influenced the rest of my career in government. For instance, I started a newspaper in the ninth grade, called The Rebel, which immediately ran into censorship problems. A copy was confiscated because I dared to criticize one of the teachers in one of the editorials. Then, a special member of the faculty was assigned to proofread and pass on each issue of The Rebel that we put out and sold. It actually made a small profit. This was in ninth grade. Although, I respected the Quaker approach to life, I also was impatient with what I considered some hypocritical aspects of it. So, I inevitably got into trouble. Although I graduated academically at the top of my class, was a member of the Cum Laude Society, and editor of the year book, and was in the student council, I nevertheless, constantly ran into trouble with the authorities. I even had a special committee to see what was going on. I was in so much trouble that in my senior year, when I told my college career advisor that I wanted to go into the State Department, he said, "Oh my God, don't even think of it. You are too much of an individual. You will get thrown out as soon as you get in, or else you will want to leave. The Government is not for you." I said, "Well, this is what I intend to do." He sort of shrugged his shoulders. I was taken aback by his feelings. But, I've never forgotten his analysis because this duality of commitment to public service and while being fiercely independent, has continued right through, and influenced and affected my whole career in the State Department.

Q: At Harvard, what did you major in?

EVANS: I thought I would be majoring in Latin. I started off very heavily in Latin, and then in my sophomore year, or just as I was choosing courses for my sophomore year, I realized I didn't want to be a Latin teacher in a boys' school. There didn't seem to be any other purpose in studying Latin. So I chose Russian. Now, this was before Sputnik, this was in 1955, and Russian was sort of an esoteric subject, the way Swahili would be now. Well Russian isn't anything esoteric now. But, at that time, there were, maybe, 20 students in beginning Russian. When I began in my sophomore year we had mixed classes from Harvard and Radcliffe. Twenty students - it was a small group, an esoteric group of diverse backgrounds. I wanted to specialize in languages and it seemed that Russian would be the language of the future.

Q: I can't remember the term, but that both use endings to tell how you are going to a place or that sort of thing.

EVANS: Absolutely. It is a very complex language, the complexity of Latin helped me and I felt comfortable with it. I chose Russian both, because I wanted to major in language and because I thought that Russian was going to be much more useful to me than Latin.

Q: Can you talk a little about Harvard and those days, what you were getting? You were pure out of Philadelphia, this is sort of a different world, can you talk about the international outlook of Harvard, and sort of the spirit of Harvard vis a vis the world, at that time, or as an undergrad?

EVANS: Well, you are right. Coming from a Quaker school in Philadelphia, Harvard, all of a sudden, was an immense opening to other influences and foreign students. The Aga Khan was in my class. I was briefly in the hospital and my next bedmate was the son of the President of Pakistan. I was exposed to Russians that I had never even thought about, let alone met. This was in 1955, only 10 years after the war. I took a double course in Russian and out of my four courses, two were Russian language. We would meet one-on-one with White Russian leaders who had come over as language instructors.

Q: We are not talking about Belarus, we are talking about politically, the Whites and the Reds of the civil war who came back?

EVANS: Suddenly the whole Russian Revolution period, at the turn of the century, came into focus for me. I had never studied European history and world history was more commonly focused in schools on World War II. In my area of Russian studies, some of the professors were in the Kerensky government. Mikhail Karpovich was a person who actually was there at the time of the Revolution. He was a wonderful lecturer. This is obviously Harvard's breadth.

I soon became aware of the Russian Research Center at Harvard which was engaged, at that time, in a sociological approach to Soviet studies, interviewing refugees and survivors, mostly from the Smolenskaya area, and compiling sociological books. Merle Fainsod was one of the big authorities at that time. The books were being written about why they act like Russians, and how the Soviet system works. One of my early teacher's lectures was speaking of Kerensky and my tutor was Richard Pipes, who ended up being Ronald Reagan's Russian expert on the National Security Council. In the early 1950s, I was present at the beginning of this whole focus by Sovietologists on what makes the Soviet Union tick.

Q: What was your impression at that time of the Soviets? Was this an implacable foe or were they human beings behind the threat . . . I mean this was at the height of the Cold War, but Harvard is Harvard, and I was wondering whether you were getting something out of it?

EVANS: Well, it was a dual thing. In 1956, Khrushchev made his famous speech revealing the Stalin crimes to the 20th Party Congress, and this was a big deal. I had just started studying Russian the year before, so I was present at that point, and involved. But, I was very much drawn to the Slovak people, always have been, and continue to be in my business and our friends. We just went to a major Russian ball at the Russian Embassy last night. I was thinking about everything that has transpired over the years. The Soviet Communist system was something I dedicated my life to helping to overthrow, I feel that I had a role in doing that, rather directly.

Yet, I really liked and respected the Russians. I admired their humanity, their sense of culture, their cultural achievements in literature. I majored in Russian History and Literature. I was thrilled with the depth and sensitivity of Russian literature, poetry, drama, and music, which I played endlessly at the time. So, here we were with the political enemy, the truly evil communist system. Yet, they were wonderful people who were dominated by that system. That was my feeling about Russia at the time.

Q: You graduated when, 19?

EVANS: From Harvard?

Q: Yes.

EVANS: The class of 1958.

Q: When you were in prep school, you already had thought about the diplomatic service. Were you getting anything out of Harvard about that?

EVANS: Yes. There was great interest in the government and most people in my group, which grew rapidly, after Sputnik. As I say, we started with 20 people, and the next year there were 200, and it grew rapidly.

Q: You might explain to someone who won't know what you mean when you say "after Sputnik."

EVANS: The Russian launch of Sputnik, their first space launch, I guess was in 1957, suddenly focused the American public mind, and the government's mind, on the Soviet's technical ability to do something like that. That created a tremendous interest and concern about Russian studies. All of a sudden, it brought a lot of funding. That was one of the immediate impacts that we saw as students. A university like Harvard, which was, along with Columbia, one of the two leading centers for Soviet studies, received a lot of grants, both from the government and from the Ford foundation. There were foundations that thought suddenly, "My God, we better train our young people in the Russian language, in Russian affairs, in Soviet affairs" to counteract this technological feat and deal with this emerging power, which is now not just killing its people at home, but could also threaten us abroad. Sputnik focused everyone's mind on that.

Q: You were saying, you had a connection to diplomacy, and how things were speeding up and growing at Harvard. Did that leave you more connections towards getting a diplomatic career?

EVANS: Yes, I was never in any doubt. I was very focused in my Russian studies group because all of my courses were special courses. This was amazing. Harvard has a program of the history and literature, which is one of their best, that was hard enough to get into, and then once you got in, you focused on either American or West European, or Eastern, or African, or whatever. I had an Armenian friend whose insights about another culture's thinking had a major effect on me. We wanted to specialize in Russian history and literature. There was no program for that. So, we lobbied, and a special Russian history and literature program was developed for the two of us, with our own teachers, our own course structure. It was extraordinary. So, my student life, curriculum and social life, basically was intensely dominated by this whole Russian, Soviet complex of courses and associations, and activities. I was always focused on going into government. I believed I wanted to go into the diplomatic service, but, I was soon tempted by offers from other agencies. As we all were approached, others of my colleagues knew they were going into the academic world and looked forward to getting a Ph.D. There were some who were thinking of business. But, my focus always was on government service, and hopefully the diplomatic service.

Q: Were you able to run across anybody who had been in the Foreign Service, to get an idea of how to prepare yourself?

EVANS: The sister of a very good high school friend of mine married Teddy Briggs, who is the son of Ambassador Ellis Briggs. I read his book, Shots Heard Round the World, and that was one direct influence. There was nobody in my immediate circle. Well, one of my friends was the grandson of Joseph Grew, the Ambassador to Japan. Everything from the people that I did know, confirmed my feeling that this was an exciting, important, and distinguished career to aspire to.

Q: You graduated in 1958, what came next?

EVANS: I had a major medical problem when I was in college, all of my sophomore year. It took up a whole semester because I was in the hospital for about three months, with internal hemorrhage of eventually unknown origin. The best doctors simply shook their heads and didn't know what it was. But, eventually, it stopped. The result was I lost a semester. This medical problem is important as we get into the Foreign Service application procedure. So, I actually did not graduate with my class in the summer of 1958. I graduated the semester behind. But what I worked out, was, that I wanted to go on and get my master's degree from the Harvard Russian Research Center, which was a two year program, which would have meant that I would have graduated in 1960. I said, "Well, since I have taken most of the courses as an undergraduate, why don't I do that in a year and a half, instead of two years?" They said that was fine.

Then, I decided that I actually wanted to go abroad. There was a great interest at that time in getting a scholarship to go abroad. Some of my colleagues were getting scholarships to go to Moscow. I had taken another seminal event trip in the summer of 1957, to Europe for three months. A high school classmate, college roommate and I went to Europe, something I am very proud of, on a budget of something like $400. We worked our way over on a Greek freighter. We took a train from Holland, where the Greek freighter docked, to Torino, Italy where we bought these Vespa motor scooters. We drove to Spain, and then drove all along the Mediterranean through Italy, crossed on a small ship to Greece, drove around Greece, drove into Istanbul. There was no road at all. It was just purely dirt at that time. We drove up through Yugoslavia, and for some unknown reason I fell in love with the country. I had started Russian two years before this, but I had not studied Serbo-Croatian. I had many interesting experiences there, including almost being shot by some Yugoslavian guards, who thought I was Russian because I spoke Russian. Not being able to speak Serbo-Croatian, I thought they would understand. They did not. They were most upset about that.

But, anyway, I got this idea that when the time came, as I was transitioning into my master's program, perhaps, I was thinking about Yugoslavia. One of my professors was Professor of Balkan languages, Serbo-Croatian and Bulgarian, Albert Bates Lord, who is a major authority. He said that he could find a scholarship for me to Yugoslavia. This was in the spring of 1959. I said, "Great." This was as I was finishing that extra semester of my college, I guess. So, he did manage for me to do this. I was the second official American scholarship receiver after World War II to Yugoslavia. This was a scholarship from the Yugoslavian government from the Commission on Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries.

Q: University of Belgrade?

EVANS: The University of Belgrade Law School. The first holder of it was someone who eventually became a Foreign Service Officer, Jerry Livingston, and I was the second holder.

I was there from 1959 until 1960, a full academic year of nine or ten months. Again, a very seminal event in my life. I arrived not knowing a word of spoken Serbo-Croatian although I knew the written language. I have, from that time, been deeply involved with Yugoslavia.

It was very clear that nobody, except for a few people, and even those were opportunists, believed in communism whereas in the Soviet system you had people who really believed in it. My take was that going to communism was an expedient way of being in power. So, being a student, and yet, as an American, enjoying a lot of privilege, I met a lot of Yugoslavs from all walks of life, business people, some government people, through my professor, who was Jovan Djordjevic. He was one of the major legal authorities and the father of the Yugoslav Constitution, which is based on the United States Constitution. I was at the law school, so that was the major impression. The other was, these were extremely, to me, fascinating people. I picked up the language very quickly. I was also flattered that I was often taken for a Yugoslav by Serbs; definitely not an American. I came back with my Vespa that I had bought two years ago in Torino and shipped back to America. I re-shipped it back to Europe and drove from the Adriatic Coast into Belgrade, right through Bosnia. I kept my Pennsylvania license plate on, drove around and was a reasonably well known figure.

It was a tough society, but again, it was 14 years after the War. The stories of the war-time massacre, the hatred that the Serbs had. Being in Belgrade, of course, I was primarily under the Serbian influence. I was more or less adopted by a family. I went to this Serbian family for Sunday dinner every week and was given various Serbian delicacies and a hot shower. I listened to their war stories, and their denunciation of Churchill and the Allies. I realized at that time that there were three major hatreds of the world that would not go away: the Serb-Croatian one, the Irish-British one, and the Israel-Palestinian one. I think maybe there are others in the world. But certainly in my area of interest, those three stood out.

But, all in all, I liked the Serbs very much and they were staunch friends of America. As you know, the Serbs did not ally themselves in any way, with the Germans, which I respected, Unlike the Croats, or the Hungarians, or practically everyone around them, the Serbs fought to the death rather than ally themselves with the Germans. The Serbian hatred of the Germans was something that I learned. I had a Serbian roommate and a Serbian girlfriend. I spoke Serbo-Croatian 18 hours a day. I lived it for a whole year, I lived it, I ate it, I slept with it, I mixed with it. But, I was also struck by the tremendous cruelty and barbaric aspects of the Serbian character which I have thought about very often in the last few years. But, as far as Communism goes, Communism was simply an overlay, which was a necessity to keep the country together, to keep the Serbs and Croats from slaughtering each other after the war. As you well know, the Serbs and the Croats each killed more of themselves than the Germans did during the war. The civil war that we have recently seen in Yugoslavia, the former Yugoslavia, goes way back.

My thesis was on the system of local self-government, which had just been introduced at the communal level. The commune was the lowest entity of government and then went up to the federal level. But, the basic governmental structure was the commune. The commune could be a village, or it could be a district of a city, or it could be a large factory. My thesis, which I turned into my master's thesis when I got back to Harvard, was an examination of the Yugoslav communal system of local self-government. In Yugoslavia, was the actual name of it. It was quite a good piece. I researched it by going to all the types of communes that made up local government. I took a factory. I took a school. I took a district in the city. I took a rural village, etc., and interviewed officials and residents. I went to elections, studied how the elections were rigged, the whole thing, and wrote what I thought was a quite good master's thesis based on that.

Q: Did you find yourself under pressure or surveillance by the UTBA, the DP, the Secret Police, and all? Was this apparent?

EVANS: I am glad you asked that because before I left to go take up this scholarship, I talked with one of the Harvard professors, Robert Wolff, who is a leading authority on the Balkans. He has written a seminal book called, The Balkans in Our Time. He was in the OSS and was parachuted behind the lines, and so forth. He told me to expect just that. After all, it was just 14 years after the war and it was a Communist system. Tito had broken with the Soviets, but we were still in opposite camps. The Yugoslav Secret Police were well known and highly respected as a fairly efficient group. He warned me about that and never to trust a Serb. He said they will reach out to shake hands with you, and at the same time, the other hand is ready to stab a knife in your back. I never forgot that expression and I never forgot the time when he demonstrated what he meant.

When I arrived in Belgrade, finally, I was fully prepared to be a target of surveillance. Now, whether I was or not, I don't know. It certainly was not evident. But when I got there, I went to register. I don't know how I survived that whole year, but, anyway, I went in to register and, as you can imagine, the place was a teaming mass of humanity. I was put in the best of the student houses, which was called the Studensky Dom Eva Lola Libra, which was on Boulevard Revolutsary. I was not that far from the Embassy, and fortunately, it was in the center of town. The worst places were over in Nuovo Belgrade, across the river, about which there were horrible stories. I had Russian and that helped a little bit. So, anyway, I made myself known and the question was where to assign me. Here I was an American. Most of the other foreign students were from the developing world. At that time, Yugoslavia was most famous for its role as a neutral. Indonesia and Egypt, as you recall, Sukarno, I guess it was, Nasser, and Tito were the three big neutrals. So, most of the foreign students were Egyptians, Jordanians, Indonesians, Syrians, and Africans. I was the only American. There was one Swede, one Belgian, and I don't recall any other westerners. So, anyway, the process was assigning a room. A Serb came up to me and said "You speak English. You're American." I said "Oh boy." I thought, here is my Communist Party watchdog. He said, "I'm Zoron, I no speak English good, but you American. I love America. We room together." He was more attractive than some of the thugs that were around, and I said, "If he is the one assigned to room with me, I'm not going to argue about it." Sure enough, we got a good room. He later confessed to me that when he saw that I was a foreigner, he immediately came up to me because if you room with a foreigner, there are only two people in a room, whereas Yugoslavs had three, sometimes four in the same small room. He was a medical student, and whether or not he reported on me, I don't know. I was fully prepared for him to do so. I had no evidence that he did. If he did, I did not hold it against him, because my feeling was, in retrospect, that it was a spontaneous thing that he saw this opportunity and came up and did it. But you never know.

Q: My experience was much the same as a diplomat. I expected to be followed everywhere, and maybe I was. But, compared to what I heard about the Soviet Union, only once in my time was I very obviously followed. I used to street walk. That is what I did. But when I first arrived, I remember coming out of a concert with Larry Herberger and somebody else, and there were policemen around the car. I thought, "My God, this is it." Actually, someone had stolen the hood ornament off my Mercedes.

EVANS: It wasn't long after I arrived, that the whole question of girls came up. I have never seen such a sex oriented society in my life. It utterly appalled us Americans and the whole western world. To me, it was not surprising, because the physical abuse of women was a fact of life. We went to a restaurant across the street called "Robashotz" where they had the most wonderful grilled meat with pepper salad with tomato and onions, and bread to die for, and wine. I tell you, there were some great nights. The first thing my roommate did was to get me to call over some girls. Soon there were girls all over the place.

She was 17 years old and I was 24 at the time. I spent the whole year with her. She was still in high school. I was very happy with her. She lived in such humble circumstances, that she was ashamed to introduce me to her family, let alone, bring me into her house. She didn't want me to see where she lived. So, I always walked her back to a certain corner and she ran off. But, she was well-dressed. She was a sensitive person. There was much temptation, but I decided I enjoyed being with her and I didn't want to run around or screw around, with anyone else.

I would go out on a street corner and there was a sculptor who was sent over to do a sculpture. He would go out on the street corner at 5:00, and say in very broken Serbo-Croatian, "I am Egyptian, I want to sleep with you." He would go on and, after maybe six to 10 tries, he would find someone, and that would be it. It never failed. He couldn't understand my refusal.

Anyway, there were other temptations, too. I then got to know a businessman, I forget exactly how. But, I knew I didn't like him. He made wallpaper and he was a private entrepreneur. He wasn't allowed to hire more than four or five people, or whatever it was. He sold wall paper. Most Serbian houses did not use wallpaper. Wallpaper was a sign of status. He had a factory up in Novi Sad, north of Belgrade, and we got together for drinks, and lunch maybe, or something. I literally forget how I got to meet him. I was suspicious of him. One day, he said, "Let's go up to a country place I know, just north of Belgrade. There are a lot of whores there and we'll have a great time," and I said, "No way. This smells of something." So, I declined, and he seemed very disappointed. Shortly thereafter, we lost contact, and that was it. That was the only incident that I remember, getting back to your point, where I felt I might be being set up.

Q: Did you ever find yourself in discussions there about Communism versus Democracy, and that sort of thing, I mean in the school dorms?

EVANS: Absolutely. Really, it was a raging debate and I alternatively poked fun at, criticized, hacked away at the old hypocrisy and brutality, anti-democratic aspect of communism. There were some who would argue with me. But most people would agree. In fact, some of the most supportive foreigners were from Indonesia, Jordan, or Syria. Some of the Africans were the ones that took the Communist Party line.

Q: This often happens. How was Milovan Djilas, The New Class received, the book which was pointing out the hypocrisy of the Communist system? I assume it was banned there at the time. Were people both aware of it and talking about it?

EVANS: You know, I don't recall that specifically, in our conversations in 1959. I, myself, think I became more aware of it after I came back in 1960.

Q: What were you getting from the students about the Soviets? How were the Soviets looked upon?

EVANS: There was tremendous hatred of the Soviets, and if you met a Yugoslav that liked the Russians or the Soviets, you knew where their political loyalties lay. My roommate, for example, just loved America, passionately. He idolized me, and I don't think that was put on. But, there were types, particularly the Montenegrins, as you know, who were more pro-Russian. The Serbs were not from that point of view. They talked about the joke, which was about the cold winter wind, Koshava, which blew in from Russia. That had political overtones. If you wanted to say something anti-Soviet, you talked about the Koshava. Most of the people that I knew feared or were very concerned about the Russians and Soviets, and were very pro-American, even when you scratched the surface, most of the officials. The hardest line Communists seemed to be some of the younger, generally Montenegrin types of limited intelligence and some of the foreign students.

Q: This was a Cold War period, did they ever talk about what might happen if the United States and NATO and the Soviets and its allies went to war, did they ever talk about the possibility of a war, what they might do?

EVANS: Again, that is an interesting question, because as we will come to later, when Tito died, I was very much involved in what would happen after that event. Even at that time, there was this concern about what would happen to Yugoslavia. Would America come in to protect Yugoslavia against Russian onslaught? My roommate was very fond of using graphic terminology to describe things. He said "We are at the crossroads of East and West, and as a result, we have the worst of the East and the worst of the West." His way of looking at life was - he said about his luck and the luck of his country was, "If I had a jar full of cunts, and one cock in there, and I had a right to go in and grab one, with my luck, I would grab the cock." That was the way he described it. He was constantly seeing doom and was very much concerned about both the Turks and the Russians. The British let them down in the war and the French couldn't be trusted. Germans were to be feared almost as much as the Russians. That left it up to the Americans. Americans were their big hope. Look at Professor Djordjevic. He used the American Constitution. So, ironically, despite the Communist and the official anti-American propaganda, America was looked to as the savior of Yugoslavia.

Q: Were the events of October 1956, the Hungarian Revolution, still reverberating, as far as their feeling that the Soviets might come in, if there was this unity in Yugoslavia? I realize that you are at the student level, but I was wondering whether they ever talked about that?

EVANS: I don't think that was a major concern. Yes, I do remember it being talked about. What happened to the Hungarians came out. Not in a political analysis, but as a close-to-home event that was relatively recent. Hungary and Hungary's relationship to the geo-political structure were very much part of Yugoslav and Serbian thinking at that point.

Q: Did you have any contact with the American Embassy at that point?

EVANS: Yes, limited. I went to Yugoslavia, particularly to prepare myself to be a Foreign Service Officer. I was interested in going, but the whole game plan, was to build up my credentials and capabilities to be an effective Foreign Service Officer. I was already influenced by George Kennan. And by Chip Bohlen who was from Philadelphia, we knew the family. On the other hand, I didn't want to go to the Embassy and be thought of as being in touch with the Embassy. So I made no effort to go to the Embassy at all. I was proud of being a student and I wanted to stay with my student friends, and not get mixed up with the damn Embassy. When I first arrived, I was advised, and I thought it was a good idea to go register, and tell them where I was. I went to the Cultural Section, downtown, I guess it was, and registered there, because I was a Cultural Exchange student.

Another unplanned contact came through the post office. I was standing in a line at the main post office because, although, I got a handsome scholarship of five thousand dinars a month - which was equivalent to a good worker's good wage, about five times what the average Yugoslav student lived on a month - it still didn't go far enough. My father had to send me, I think, the grand sum of $50.00 a month, or maybe it was $100.00, but it wasn't that much. But, it was a lot when I exchanged it. We developed a way to send it. This was a little typical thing that characterized the whole approach to Yugoslavia to things. I went to the post office, I guess, naively . . . you may remember that big central post office.

Q: Yes.

EVANS: Across from the parliamentary building . . .

Q: I can't remember what the square, Turg, something or other, but there were two, anyway . . .

EVANS: So, I went up to this woman behind one of the national counters, and I said, I'm an American student here, and my family wants to send me some dollars, because there is no other way. If I got a fifty dollar bill, I could convert that into some dinars, and she said, "Oh, it is totally illegal to send money through the mail. But I will tell you how to do it. Tell your father to put the money in an envelope and put black pieces of paper on either side. That way, it won't show up when it goes through our machines." So, I wrote home and told them to do that. I got my money without fail. I thought it was a very telling and typical story of how the people coped.

But, I was standing in line, around Thanksgiving time, at that same post office. There was a woman in line, and somehow we recognized each other - although I was looking pretty scruffy, I'm sure - as Americans. She introduced herself. She was the wife of the number two political officer at the Embassy. You mentioned names, but for the life of me, I can't remember it what it was. It later turned out that he was CIA. I identified myself, and she said "We try to have young people over for Thanksgiving. Would you like to come to our home?" So, I went to their home for Thanksgiving, which was the first contact I had with embassy officers. He called me, unobtrusively, a couple times, maybe, to see how things were going. Most of the other guests were diplomats and people from the American community. There may have been some exchange students. I don't know whether the Fulbright program was up and running then or not. Anyway, there were some academic types, I think, and others. But again, I was the only, official American cultural exchange student at the time, a status I was rather proud of. I was struck by how isolated diplomats were. This fellow had never, for instance, been on a trolley car. I think I said to him, "How can you report on what is going on, I've been here two or three months, and I know more about what is going on than you seem to in the Embassy."

Q: You left there in 1960?

EVANS: I left there in the summer of 1960 and went back to America to finish my final year of study. I had taken the first-half semester of my two year master's program, so I went back to finish my whole year, 1960 - 1961, of my master's program at Harvard, at the Harvard Russian Research Center. I converted my work in Yugoslavia to my master's thesis, which I did under the direction of Professor Adam B. Ulam, Director, Russian Research Center.

Q: You got your Masters in 196_?

EVANS: I got my Masters in 1961.

Q: Then what did you do?

EVANS: Well, there was big pressure from the family to come back to Philadelphia and go to law school. I agreed to at least look into it. So, I applied to the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where my grandfather sort of set a family tradition of having a degree. I got into law school. Not only that, I got a full two year scholarship, everything, room and board included. Someone had set up a scholarship for those students who qualified academically and whose parents or grandparents were from Philadelphia. I was the first one to qualify, in something like 20 years. The University of Pennsylvania was very excited about this. So, I started law school. But I guess, at that point, I had just had too much academic work and I did not last more than a short time, much to my grandfather's disappointment. By this time my father had died.

I just felt, I've got to get out of this family situation. I've got to get out of Philadelphia. I want to go into the Foreign Service. I don't want three more years of studying. I want to get on with it. There had been some pressure to get a Ph.D., which I said I didn't want to do. I wanted to get on with the real world. I didn't want to go on studying forever.

It turned out, that, as I rather anticipated, the medical problem loomed large. I looked into the Foreign Service and realized that there were these various stages you have to go through. You have to take the written exam. Then you have to pass the oral exam, and if you did that, then you went on to pass the medical exam, and finally pass the security exam. So, it was a long, multi-year process. I forget when I first took the written exam, but it soon became evident that I would have to deal with my medical problem, which went back to my sophomore year in college. I was fine, and one of the reasons I went to Europe in 1957, and drove through Istanbul, with no road, the things I put myself through - drinking water everywhere in Europe, and so forth, was to prove that I really was healthy. They had told me that I was going to be totally immobilized, and that I wouldn't be able to pursue a career in the Foreign Service. So, I felt that I was in pretty good shape, physically, but I had to prove it. So, I thought: "Well, the way to prove it is to do my military service." This was the summer of 1961. So, I was immediately classified 4F, on medical grounds, because they got my medical records from Harvard. I thought, "Oh my God, I'll never get into the Foreign Service." I then launched a major campaign to change that classification. I say this, frankly, with some pride, because it shows how determined I was. A lot of people would have caved. I remember what was going on at that time. The Berlin crisis was in progress and going into the military was risky. So, I opted for the navy. I was all set to go to Newport, in the fall of 1961. A friend of mine then in Philadelphia said, "Look, this is crazy," I was going to put myself through three years in the Navy, in order to go into the Foreign Service. I was literally a week away from Newport. So, I went into the Army National Guard, and did my duty in the first half of 1962. I got out of the Army, in the late summer, August of 1962, still with a single-minded purpose of going into the Foreign Service. Meanwhile, I had taken the Foreign Service exam, in late 1961, I guess, and I passed the written. Then, I had my first oral exam, and I had failed it.

Q: I would like to get any thoughts about the oral exam in the 1950s?

EVANS: It was the fall of 1961.

Q: Do you remember what you were asked, or anything?

EVANS: I remember the circumstances well. It was a tribunal of three people who were very hostile. I had been warned by others that this was a very confrontational sort of thing. The objective was to make you uncomfortable, and to put you on the defensive, and to make you squirm. They would resort to things like giving you cigarettes and no ash tray, to see what you would do with the ash, and other discomforting things. Sure enough, there was that. But there were questions, in addition to those sort of annoying questions, there were questions about rivers, nothing about economics, as I recall, at all. But, a lot about rivers and geography, American History, and I failed. In those days, you had the interview for about an hour, one on three, and then you went out and they deliberated. About 10 minutes later, they brought you in, sat you down and gave you the word. I guess I instinctively knew when I came in, from their faces, that I wasn't going to pass. I was absolutely horrified, because by this time, I had made myself 1A. I had made the commitment to go into the military to get into the Foreign Service, and they failed me. It was a tremendous, psychological problem.

Q: Fifteen years later, I was giving that exam, which is pretty much the same. The other thing was, I think, the people who were coming up were usually people who had done well in school, all the time. This was probably the first time anybody looked them in the eye and said "No."

EVANS: That's true. I suppose I wasn't use to failing. I had done very well. I graduated Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa, 24th, out of a class of 1,200 people in a foreign country. In Yugoslavia, I spoke Russian and Serbo-Croatian fluently. "What do you want?" Believe it or not, they said, "You haven't had enough experience. Go do something else, like get a job, or go into the Army, or something." I said, "Well, I am going to go into the Army as it turns out." They said, "Come back in a year, come back in six months, and try again." I did very well on the written exam. But, they seemed to feel that I needed to be more seasoned or something like that. Maybe they were right. Who knows.

Let me go back to another . . . if I may, then I guess, we will have to wind things up. But, this is important, and, again, it relates to the whole aspect of my career that I think is somewhat unique. After I got to be classified 1A, I did an incredibly foolish thing. I thought, "Well, now I am 1A, I will go into the Army." Without thinking about it, I went down to the local Army recruiting office, walked in, without any preparation in advance, and said, "Here I am, I want to join, and I want to go into Army intelligence, because it seemed to me that is where I would be best useful." So, the Sergeant said, rather wearily, "Okay, sit down." It was a one-on-one interview. He said, "Tell me about yourself." I said, "Well I'm this, my school, Harvard where I majored in Russian Studies and Yugoslavia, and I speak several languages. I was in law school, but I want to go into the Foreign Service. I want to do my military service first. I think intelligence would be the place for me to be," and so forth. He was taking notes, and looking at me, increasingly, sort of severely. So, we finished and I sat there, expectedly waiting for him to say, "Boy, do we need someone like you." He pushed himself back from the desk and tore up my application. He said, "I wouldn't touch you with a 10 foot pole." I was absolutely stunned. I said, "Well, what do you mean?" Here, I had just left law school, reversed this 4F thing to be 1A, all of my academic training, my sacrifice of the whole thing, determined to serve my country. This now is in 1961. President Kennedy, earlier that year, had said "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." That was ringing in my ears. I was dedicated to government service, 13 years of Quaker school, the whole bit, and he said "I wouldn't touch you with a 10 foot pole." He said, "You've been in Big Red." I said, "What?" He said, "Yugoslavia, Soviet Warsaw Pact." I said, "Yugoslavia doesn't like Communism." He said, "You've been in Big Red." That was the first time I had heard that term - "You've been in Big Red." I said, "They're not Communist anymore than you are." He said, "There is no way we can check up on you during that time. You are completely uncheckable. You could have been doing all sorts of things. You could have been a spy." Suddenly, I realized he was suspecting me of having been a spy because I was over there, trying to get myself academically prepared, and qualified to serve my country. So, I left, absolutely shaken. I went back home, and at this time, we lived in a very big house. My grandfather had quite a personality. There were suits of armor in the front hall, coats of arms, and everything, and I thought "What I am I doing?"

So, I went up to my room, and sat down at my typewriter and pounded out a single-spaced, three page letter to President Kennedy, that very afternoon. The gist of it was; here I have prepared myself to serve the government, I have done this, this, and this, since I was in high school. I put myself through all this business, and then some ignorant soldier tells me that they won't touch me with a 10 foot pole. You ask young people to serve your country. How do you square this, and everything? This is outrageous. I demand an explanation. I posted the thing, having never made a copy of the letter, unfortunately. If I did, it was a carbon copy.

Two days later, the phone rings, and my grandmother said "David, some man wants to speak to you." This voice on the phone, I later recognized this as an unmistakable government voice, said "David Evans?" I replied, "Yes." "Are you David Evans of such and such address?" I said "Yes." " Did you recently write a letter to somebody?" I said "Yes." "Will you be available tomorrow morning?" I said, "Yes." He said, "We will be there." So, I got directions squared away, and at 10:00 the next morning, a black government car drove into the driveway. By the way, they also said, "Do you have any objection to being recorded?" I said, "No." So, here were these two government agency types. I don't know who they were. Oh, over the phone, I said, "Yes, I did write a letter to somebody very important." They said, "I know, because he read it himself." Obviously, the shit hit the fan. So, these government types came into my grandfather's house, much to the great interest of my grandfather, my grandmother, and my mother, who was there. She took them into the living room, which was quite impressive, and sat them down. I said, "Okay." I felt, "Ah, now something is going to happen." They turned on the recorder, I told them the whole story. They took a few notes, they thanked me very much, and left.

I waited, and nothing happened. There was no letter, there was no phone call, nothing happened at all. Life went on, and I then pursued this Naval channel, and then, as I say, got into the Army National Guard, and fulfilled my military service that way. I came out of the Army National Guard program in the summer of 1962. During the time that I was in the Army, and I had my head, virtually shaven off, as a recruit. I was in basic training.

I took the oral Foreign Service exam for the second time. I didn't have to take the written. I passed the oral exam with flying colors. I must say, I was in the best shape I probably had ever been in, but I was old. It was 1962, so I was 26 years old. Most of my colleagues were 19, 20. I was very pleased. I was in fantastic shape, and did better than some of them, in physical training. Anyway, when I came out of the Army in August of 1962, I thought, "Well, I am now in a position to get on with my life." I had met my future first wife and I had passed the oral exam. I had fulfilled my military service. I thought, "Things are going to go fine from now on." There are still several hurdles.

Q: So, how did you get into the Foreign Service?

EVANS: Well, I had taken my written exam, earlier, actually, before I went into the military, I forget when that was. I passed that, then I took my first oral exam, which I did not pass. That was before I went into the military. That was yet another disappointment. I think I had had a number of disappointments: overcoming my medical problem, security, navy v. army, and here, after passing the written, I failed the first oral. But, I had been warned that such things happen. I was told that I should go back and try again, which I did, when I was in the military. Perhaps, I didn't mention this, but I passed the second time. I looked very fit and was fit. I had matured, I guess, a certain amount, given my short military service. So, that was done. I then had the physical and the security parts of my examination to pass.

The physical suddenly presented a problem. Even after I had gone through the whole exercise of reversing my initial 4F classification, and becoming 1A, serving in the military, precisely and only to show that I was physically capable of being accepted into the Foreign Service, questions were raised by the State Department about my physical capability. After a very frustrating time, sending documents back and forth, with evidence of military service and reclassification, I finally had to enlist some political support to reverse the State Department's resistance to taking me on medical grounds. I got an appointment to see a doctor in Philadelphia, I.S. Ravden, who was President's Eisenhower's internist when he had colitis. Through my own family doctor in Philadelphia, I got an appointment with Ravden. I was at the beginning of a process where I realized one had to rely on whatever contacts one had in order to either buck the system or make the system work in your favor. I went to see I.S. Ravden in his very large office. He welcomed me. I had never seen him before. He didn't know a thing about me. I explained the situation. I said I was perfectly fit, and showed him my papers, that had been prepared by my surgeon and doctor to get me into the Army. So, he said, "Well, I know the head of the Medical Department of the State Department, very well, he is a good friend of mine. Let me give him a call." So, on the spot, he swiveled around, picked up the phone himself, and called the State Department in Washington. Luckily for me, the head of MED was in, and they had a brief chat. He said, "Look, I've got a young man here who has passed his oral exam, served his military service, seems to be in good health, from everything I can see. I understand there is a problem, but I would like to see him in the State Department." There was silence, as they talked. Then, he said "That's fine," and he put the phone down. He said to me, "It is all done, no problem, you're in for the medical."

So, that was, as I say, again, an interesting learning experience, to say the least. As I got up to go, thanking him profusely, he called me back from the door, and said "One thing, Mr. Evans, now, don't get sick." So, I vowed to myself I would not. I must say, during my Foreign Service career, I had no medical problems.

So, that left only the security problem. Of course, I recalled that experience I had had with the Army and intelligence people, concerned about my graduate year in Yugoslavia. You may recall, the sergeant scrunching up my application form, and heaving it into the wastebasket. But, I figured that my rebuttal of that, by writing the President would be there, if they went back and checked that records. There was nothing else that I can conceivably think of, other than going to Harvard itself, that would trigger any security concerns. So, I was preparing to be called, as it were. Time went on, and time went on. I would call and get the answer, "Well, everything seems to be in order, don't call us, we'll call you." At one point, some agents had come out to my house. Again, my father had died at this point, and I was living with my mother and her parents, my grandparents' house, which was a rather large, impressive house. I say that only because of the effect it may have had on these security types. At one point, two security people from the State Department came out to see if I was myself, I guess. I think I was not at home at the time. They came in and interviewed my mother, and had my name wrong, or there was something wrong, and they kept insisting to my mother that my name was "Charles", or "Robert," or something like that. She was appalled at the sloppiness and ignorance of the agents. That was perhaps my second or third time with government security types for whom I was rapidly developing a very skeptical view, as to their intelligence and capability.

Meanwhile, a friend of mine, a high school classmate, had gotten into the State Department. So, in desperation, I called him. He happened to be working in his first junior officer job in the security, which was in SY, in the file Section. He had access to files, such as people, like myself, waiting to be approved. So, I said, "Please check to see what the status is." So, in two days, he called me back, very agitatedly, and said that he had checked in the appropriate file drawer, and had looked through the "E" section, and there was no David Evans there. He then checked further in the file drawer, and found that at the back of the drawer, my file had fallen through the back of the drawer. It had disappeared down behind the file. So, he retrieved it, gave it to someone and told them that it was long overdue for attention. The shocking thing to me was, that if I had not had a friend to do that, that file might have stayed there for 20 years, and I would not have heard for 20 years. Once again, I learned, as I was rapidly doing, another disturbing lesson about the government and its way of doing things. But, once that file was obtained, things moved quite quickly. I was given my security approval and entered Foreign Service in April of 1963.

Q: Could you characterize the group that you came in with? I assume you came in with a group?

EVANS: A-100. It was an impressive group. There weren't that many of us at the time, I suppose 20. I was one of two with a master's degree. There was one Ph.D., who was Ernie Preeg, later went on to become Ambassador in South America somewhere [Haiti], Myles Frechette, who is, I think, still an Ambassador in South America [Cameroon and Colombia], and Elizabeth Ann Swift, who was one of the two women held in the Iran hostage crisis, Ted Russell, who was our first Ambassador to Slovakia, who is now at the Army Staff college, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. It was a good group, and I was pleasantly, if not surprised, then relieved, that they were both nice, and well qualified. Also, at that time, all, I think, with maybe one or two exceptions, were seemingly very dedicated to a Foreign Service career.

Q: Well then, after your initial training, where were you assigned?

EVANS: I mentioned one aspect of the A-100 course that had a bearing on my future service. There are two other things. First, before going into the A-100 course, I was assigned to the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, INR, in the East European Division, opposite RSB, it was called, at the East European Division, because of my graduate work experience in Yugoslavia. Believe it or not, at that time, the State Department, for whatever reasons didn't have Yugoslav analysts. So, before I even went to the A-100 course, I was assigned for a month or two to handle Yugoslavia in INR. Now, I was, frankly, shocked at the low-level of competence in INR, as far as analysis, and depth of analysis, and political approach to problems, in this area, I was very well versed in, having gotten a master's degree at Harvard in this area, and having studied in Yugoslavia, in this case. I just mention this in passing, because it was an initial jolt. I kept thinking, what a tremendous difference there was between the academic standards of analytical and educational intelligence standards that I had been exposed to in the university, compared to what I saw in the State Department's INR Division. Also, it was something that, years later, I thought about.

I went onto the A-100 course, and as I said, it was a good group. During that course which treated the war, then heating up in Vietnam, we were given, obviously, indoctrination, in the concept and the beneficial aspect of a program called "Strategic Hamlets." In essence, it involved herding peasants, involuntarily, into so-called "Strategic Hamlets" at night, where they would be rendered safe from the Viet Cong. This was deemed to be a great thing. Frankly, I thought it was a vast mistake. I had not really thought about Vietnam at all, before then. Again, this was early 1963. Things had not gotten ugly yet. It just seemed to me, that our approach was totally crazy. To think that these people, who were tied to their villages and their land, would find this acceptable, or that it would have any long-term sustainability as an effective program to herd these people in. What happened was, the Viet Cong would then come and chew up their crops or destroy their villages at night. They even might be safe in these hamlets, which were very Americanized, and complete, I guess, with television, PX type arrangements, and so forth, which didn't answer the Vietnamese culture at all.

Other than that, the A-100 course went well. We all got our marching orders at the end of it, and sure enough, somebody did get Tijuana, Tijuana and Ouagadougou, being on the worst list of assignments. I got a very unusual assignment, much to my surprise. I had indicated an interest in Eastern Europe, and the people who had come to talk about assignments to us had said that it was almost impossible to go to Eastern Europe, in the beginning of your career. In fact, there was a policy at that time, that you not be assigned to Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union, unless you had had a previous foreign assignment somewhere else. There was also a great concern about your marital status. We were lectured about that, and told, not only did we have to be married to go to Eastern Europe, but, and here we were given a stern look by the official, we had to be happily married. So, with that in mind, I nevertheless said I would like to go to Eastern Europe. At this point, I was engaged to my first wife, who was an artist. I had put down Warsaw as my desired post without any thought that I would ever get there in the near future. But, nevertheless, because I knew Warsaw had a very active art community, despite the Communist government, the cultural life was very rich there.

Anyway, my assignment was, a short-term assignment to be the escort of an orchestra that was being sent out by the Office of Cultural Presentations, CU/CP, which was then headed by a somewhat legendary figure, named Glenn Wolfe, who had been the administrative officer in Frankfurt before. He was quite a mover and shaker in that area. The State Department, at that time, and subsequently, USAID (United States Agency for International Development), did send out cultural presentations. These could range from and individual singer or speaker or musician to a full-fledged symphony orchestra. The orchestra I was assigned to accompany, was a new orchestra, called the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. It was actually a string orchestra with 20 musicians. This was to be, its first ever, tour abroad, in fact, perhaps its first tour ever. It was a new orchestra that had been formed from some good musicians, but, nevertheless, picked up musicians from the Los Angeles Symphony and other places, by a very young, controversial and dynamic black director, named Henry Lewis. When he died last year it was reported on television as one of the major people who had died last year, having become the first black conductor to head a major symphony orchestra, which was the New Jersey Symphony. Henry Lewis had put this group together. His wife was the soprano soloist with this orchestra. Her name was Marilyn Horne. You may know Marilyn Horne today, she is probably the leading mezzo soprano in the United States and has been for the past 20 years. She just gave a recital in Washington, and I went to see her. Well, I did not know that much about music, frankly. I always liked music, but I did not play an instrument myself. I was in the high school choir, and I was somewhat surprised that I got this assignment. It seemed like a great thing, I said, "Great, what is the timing of it?" They said, "It would be for four months in the fall of 1963, beginning in early September." So, that worked, because my wedding was the 24th of August. So, we got married and then came down to Washington for a quick orientation, and flew off on TWA to Los Angeles to hook up with this orchestra. This was essentially our honeymoon. We shared it with 20 musicians, and six of their wives for four months. It was an extraordinary itinerary of approximately 15 or 17 European countries, and some 35 different cities, in four months. I asked why, since the bulk of the trip covered every country, conceivably, including Yugoslavia, I was chosen for this and they said, "Well, because you speak Serbo-Croatian." Although we spent most of our time in Italy, France, Germany, etc., it was because of my Serbo-Croatian I was chosen for this. Well, I didn't know what to expect. We can go on more about that or not, but that was my first assignment.

Q: I think probably we might move on to after that. In the first place, were you there when Kennedy's assassination was announced? How did that go?

EVANS: That was a particularly momentous event in my life. I was still with the orchestra in November of 1963, on our tour. We were in Bergen, Norway on the day of the assassination. We had a concert planned as usual. The night before that concert, the night before Kennedy's assassination, I had a very vivid dream, in which I saw a newspaper headline saying, "Kennedy Killed." I woke up, very much affected by this dream, that President Kennedy was killed. Mind you, again, at that time, although I had sorted out my own political views, I was more a Democrat than a Republican, and, in any event, I was very positively influenced by Kennedy and his call to service, and so forth. He was close to an idol to me. I told my wife that I had dreamt this, and didn't think that much more about it, after I got fully awake, although it was just very disturbing, because I was waking up and thinking about this extremely vivid dream, which I can still see today.

That evening - the time difference, I suppose, was six hours - the concert began as usual. It was the custom for me to sit in the first row or two, just to keep an eye on things, and to occasionally go back stage to see if things were okay. I didn't see any reason to do so that evening, but there was a very long pause in the intermission, and the Norwegian audience, a very polite audience, nevertheless, started to get restless with impatient clapping of impatience. I thought, "What the heck is going on?" So, I went backstage and there was Marilyn Horne in tears, with Henry looking very upset. The musicians had all come back on stage, by the way. But, Henry, the conductor, and Marilyn, the soprano, who was singing a program of Handel, that evening, were in their dressing room. So, I found them, and an official who turned out to be an official from the Norwegian Foreign Ministry in Oslo, turned to me, and Henry said, "President Kennedy has been shot." I had this initial reaction of "Well, I know," because I had dreamt it. Then, we had to decide what to do. The three of them turned to me and said, "You're the diplomat. You decide what to do." I thought that the thing to do would be to go on with the show because I thought President Kennedy, who had evidenced great support for this international cultural exchange, would have liked it that way. Then, at the end, since the orchestra didn't know - we four people were the only people who knew, then at the end, dedicate the program to his memory. So, everyone seemed to think that was fine and that is what we decided to do. I'm not sure, in retrospect, if I would do it again. but that is what we decided to do. So, I went and sat down. Marilyn and Henry came out on the stage, and the orchestra looked at them sort of quizzically having been out as long as they were. Henry started up, and Marilyn started singing a rather lachrymose Handel piece, and promptly burst out into tears, and couldn't go on. Whereupon Henry very authoritatively took matters into his hand, quieted everybody, and made the announcement that we had just been informed that President Kennedy had been shot. The audience rose in total silence, without being told to bow their heads, for a moment, and then silently trooped out of the hall. So, everybody, more or less, can think back and remember where they were at Kennedy's assassination, and that was the experience, and the place, and the moment that I remember.

Q: After this trip, what was in the cards for you?

EVANS: Well, I looked forward to a more stable situation because the trip was not all that easy. And for four months I hardly knew my wife, as it were. The honeymoon wasn't a real honeymoon, it was a working honeymoon, and there were a lot of stresses. But, we found a beautiful house to rent opposite the three sisters, rocks in the Potomac, in North Arlington. At that time, it was completely woods. I was assigned to the German desk, and I think I had some sort of another course at FSI (Foreign Service Institute), prior to going to the German desk. I thought, "This was good," and my wife enrolled in her master's program at American University to get her art master's degree. We looked forward to having a nice spring, summer, and year, and maybe, several years in Washington. We had an absolutely lovely house with the grand piano. It was just a fluke that we got it from the woman who went off to Europe and wanted someone to feed her cat.

I had not even reported to the German Affairs Office, when I got a telephone call. The telephone caller said, "Would you like to go to Warsaw?" I said, "Would I like to go to Warsaw?" Absolutely, this was beyond my dreams. The reason was that a U.S. diplomat named Irwin Scarbeck had been arrested for espionage. He was later to be sentenced to 10 years at Ft. Leavenworth, the first U.S. diplomat to be sentenced for espionage. They needed an extra body in Warsaw. He was a GSO, General Services Officer, I would not go into his job, but I would go into the Consular Section and somebody in the Consular Section would be moved to the GSO position. I said, "When do you want me?" They said, in about six weeks. Well, at this time, I knew Russian, and Serbo-Croatian, but no Polish. So, they gave me six weeks of Polish training.

My wife was very unhappy about going to Poland. She was looking forward to getting her master's, to keeping house and settling down, and to leading a more normal life. I had hoped that the lure of Polish artists would be sufficient to help, and in fact, she did eventually get very involved in the Polish art scene. But, initially she was very unhappy, and also, we had just discovered that she was pregnant with our first child.

I also went through, intensive security briefings, because the Scarbeck thing had shaken up not only Warsaw Embassy but the whole Foreign Service. This was big stuff. Scarbeck had been trapped by a Polish girl, a Polish blonde. So, I studied Polish and prepared to go out there in six weeks. I was also told that, I was the first junior officer to be sent to an Iron Curtain post, without having first served in another foreign post. This was a great honor, as it were. I was given these intensive security briefings, where pictures of Polish blondes were flashed on the screen and I was shown maps of the area.

Q: I guess they were all concerned about honey traps, I think was the term.

EVANS: That was right. They were concerned all right, and I was taken aback by the intensity, almost ferociousness, of this security briefing. As I say, Polish blondes were seen as the enemy, quite clearly. I was shown pictures of typical Polish blondes they wanted you to avoid and told stories of entrapment scenarios that had happened. Of course, they told about the Scarbeck case: how he was married and the hold over him was that if he didn't give the blonde NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) secrets, she would be sent to a prison camp to be a prison prostitute. To avoid that, as he thought he was doing, and to help her, he did steal classified NATO documents, copy them, and then give them to her for her bosses. Eventually he was caught. So, that was one way.

But, one story, in particular, seemed relevant later. That was a story about a Warsaw elevator and an American diplomat. An Americana diplomat gets into an elevator in Warsaw. On the next floor, a beautiful Polish girl gets in the elevator in a trench coat. They go up another two stories and the elevator stops. There seems to be a problem with the elevator. Two people look at each other, bang for help, call for help, and in due course, they hear people coming to open the trap door at the top of the elevator. The diplomat thinks, "Ah, help is here. All is well." As the trap door opens on the top of the elevator car, the blonde suddenly throws her coat off and is standing there stark naked and hurls herself on the diplomat. Whereupon the "technicians" who were coming to save them, turn out not to be technicians, but photographers, and are snapping pictures. So, the moral of that story is, never get into an elevator with a Polish blonde. I used that later to write a story that appeared in a national magazine, with an enticing cartoon of a Polish blonde in a furry coat, with a scared diplomat. That was one story.

There was another story against the background of Big Red, because that was what we were dealing with, Big Red, and Big Red extended from all of Asia and Eurasia and Soviet Union, right down into Eastern Europe. Big Red was what we had to be mindful of, and be careful of. The other story was real. I won't reveal his name. An American diplomat and his wife were going to a party in Moscow, I think, and the babysitter, at the last minute, called in and said she was sick, which turned out not to be the case. As a result, the wife had to stay home with the children. He went to the party alone. There was a lot of drinking. When he didn't show up, his wife was concerned. Let's say it was Friday night, Saturday morning, when his wife woke up, and he hadn't come home. So a hue and cry was raised. Finally the embassy security people tracked down where this party had been, in some Russian apartment. They burst in and found bottles and glasses and filth all over the place, from obviously a huge party. But no one was there except the American diplomat, stripped naked, except for his underwear, which had been taken off and put over his head. He had been given some sort of "mickey" in his drinks. He subsequently left Moscow and pursued a career in another geographic area. Such, were the stories. But the underlying message was, avoid Polish blondes at all costs.

I learned the language quite well, as a matter of fact, in six weeks, and we took a ship over, I think it was "The America." In Warsaw we were met by Doug Martin. He is a good friend, and headed the Economic Section. Although I was going into the Consular Section, he was the one who was responsible for getting us settled. So, for me, it was very exciting. For my wife, it was not an appealing assignment.

Q: You were in Warsaw from when to when?

EVANS: I was there for three years, early summer of 1964 until the summer of 1967. That was my first post abroad.

Q: How would you describe the political situation in Poland at that time, in 1964, when you arrived?

EVANS: Well, initially, it was fairly relaxed. Gomulka was still head of the Communist Party and there was no doubt that they were part of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Bloc. But, it was also very clear that these people, unlike the Soviets themselves, with the possible exception of Gomulka and a very few people around him, didn't really believe in Communism. Most people who joined the party had done so for understandably opportunistic reasons. Surprisingly, the cultural world was very open to us and other members of the Embassy. We were able to develop true friendships with people in the cultural world: artists, musicians, actors, writers. Naturally we were told, and I fully believed, that many of these people were probably reporting on us, as of course, we were meant to report on them. After every occasion, you were suppose to scurry back and write notes about them: their characteristics, their apparent financial or monetary or drinking problems or wife swapping problems. So, they were doing the same thing. But, nevertheless, it was very open and we were able to entertain a lot of Poles at our house.

There were two levels: one was the official Communist political world, which was confrontational, hostile, and there were difficulties, there was spying, the military attachï¿½s were followed very closely, for example. That was a big concern. There were innumerable instances of entrapment and the famous Polish blondes, were in fact, working very hard.

Our first apartment was under the Marine house, across the street from the Embassy in Warsaw. That was a hang out, in the courtyard, for Polish blondes, who tried to entice their way into the Marine house. I remember one night, coming back from a reception, this figure stepped out of the shadows. It was a female in a trench coat. Something, the moon, or the light, whatever it was, hit on her metal teeth. I was so horrified at that, I think I practically let out a shriek and ran for the entrance way to get home. One of the young ladies was successful. She did get up to the Marine house. The Marine in question said he woke up, and there she was, sitting on the end of his bed. He said, "My God. Here I was, just in my skivvies, and she said she had problems. Could he help her?" But before they did that, she said, "Maybe it would be better if they slept together a little." He openly admitted all this. I don't know whether anything happened or not, but I think he eventually was moved on.

Q: What did consular work consist of at this time?

EVANS: I was initially assigned to the Visa Office of the Consular Section because Poland, at that time, under the then operative immigration system, had the fourth largest quota. Quotas at that time were based on the percentage of the U.S. population, so that Ireland, Germany, England, and Poland, I believe, had the four largest quotas. That meant there was a very heavy load of immigration visas, both NIVs (Non Immigrant Visas) but particularly IVS (Immigrant Visas) to be processed. We had a chief, a deputy chief of the Consular Section, one non-immigrant visa officer, and three immigrant visa officers. So, it was a big operation, for a post of that size. I was thrown in with two other colleagues to be one of the three interviewing immigrant visa officers. We did have the interesting, occasionally heart rendering task, of interviewing, and often being the first line and the last line of rejection of Poles, generally for criminal reasons, occasionally for political reasons. However, you could waive membership in the party or the youth organizations.

Q: Not so much the party, but the general groupings, or mass organizations, as opposed to the Communist party itself.

EVANS: I think you are right to make that distinction. There was a Peasant's Party; there was a National Front, as you say, there was Communist Youth Movement; there was a women's youth organization. If we could be convinced that their membership had been involuntary, that was the key to determination. If the membership was involuntary, i.e., done for reasons not of belief, but for practical, pragmatic reasons, for force, then we could recommend a waiver. But, the recommendation had to go to the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service), in Frankfurt, as I recall. There were a lot of criminal problems. These were very heart rending because if it was a misdemeanor of six months or less, that could be waived, virtually on the spot. But if they were given a sentence of more than six months, or certainly a year, on some felony charge, it was very difficult to waive. Indeed, many economic crimes, were in fact, political. Stealing of a piece of wood was common. There were heart rending stories of peasants who had allegedly, probably did, steal a bit of food, or a piece of wood, or something, from a so-called "state area," to feed or keep their family warm. But this was on their record. There were some other activities, like prostitution, and of course, there was the health problem too. That was pretty clean-cut. The big concern was tuberculosis.

So, they were long days, hard work, grueling work, all in Polish, without interpreters. But all three of us knew Polish well enough to conduct the interviews in Polish. We processed, I suppose, each of us, 20 people a day. There was a huge bullpen of Polish employees who worked frantically, trying to keep order in these mobs of people who lined up in front of the Embassy every day. So, I did that for my first year. Then I was promoted to Deputy Chief of the Consular Section in my second year. The chief was not actually a consular officer. He was the officer who was the Chinese speaking officer because Warsaw had the distinction of being the place where we conducted our relations with Communist China. That was very interesting. The officer who was the China officer was there. He was parked in the Consular Section and he was made the Chief of the Consular Section and I was made the Deputy Chief. I was told that I would really be running the place, because the Chinese speaker had other things to do. He was also very enamored with model trains, and gimmicks, and was not really interested in running the shop. So, it was a great opportunity for me, and helped me to get two very quick promotions. I went out there as a FSO-7, and I left as a FSO-05.

Q: How about protection and welfare, was there much of a problem with, particularly, the Polish Americans, but just plain tourists coming back and then running into trouble? How responsive were the police, and all, that sort of thing?

EVANS: Yes, there were problems. There were problems in getting Social Security and welfare checks, the occasional harassment of Polish Americans who were deemed to have been kind of revolutionary types and enemies of the state. We would have to intervene on their behalf. There was no major case that came up, but there were low-level things. We constantly sent letters to the Foreign Ministry, and had occasional meetings, to try to straighten things out.

Q: But, you didn't have the case that we had when I was in Yugoslavia, at the same time, particularly of Croatians coming back, Croatian-Americans, and with pamphlets, and trying to stir up the pot, trying to organize opposition? Of course, they were picked up immediately.

EVANS: You are right on that. No, I don't remember anything of that nature. People that came back, Polish-Americans, wanted to come back, I think, for sentimental reasons, to see their families. Some of them, of course, wanted to retire and get their American paychecks; which went a long way in Poland. But, I do not remember, even during the three years that I was at the Embassy and two years in the Consular Section, any cases of that nature. The only real problem we had was a Polish American woman. She was sort of mad, and for some reason wanted to come in and talk with this Chinese specialist, who, of course, the year I was there, was the Protection Officer. She continued to follow him when he was the Chief of the Consular Section. She came in to report that she was being followed and was receiving radio signals from China, that Polish dogs were farting at her, and she wanted the Embassy to do something about this.

The real problems were not so much American citizens getting involved in difficulties outside the Embassy, as attacking Embassy officers. One disgruntled Polish-American, for example, picked up a flagpole in the office and attacked the Consular Officer. We had many bizarre, humorous cases too. The best one being when I was in my third year there. I had moved up to the Economic Section. I received a call from the Visa Section, where I still would help out. A woman had come into the non-immigrant Visa Officer's office, who did not know Polish very well, and started to undress. Well, he initially thought this was some sort of provocation. It turned out that the poor woman thought he was the doctor. He called from the office in a great panic, that this woman was undressing and he couldn't tell her not to. I rushed down and we saved the situation. The poor woman was greatly embarrassed.

Q: You probably had, what, two Ambassadors while you were there?

EVANS: That's right. We had a very fine Ambassador of the old school, John Morris Cabot, who, among other things, introduced me to the art of the sauna. He had picked up the habit of the sauna in his previous post in Finland, and had a sauna installed in the basement of the Embassy. In fact, when I got there, the Chief of the Consular Section, who was Walter Smith, a very colorful figure, to say the least, a good chief, in that he taught me a lot, shortly after I had come on board, said, "You haven't met the Ambassador yet?" and I said, "No, I haven't." Things were quite structured in those days. Tuesday night, and every Tuesday and Thursday, the Ambassador would have a sauna, and invite maybe three or four junior and mid-level officers to have the sauna with him, after which they would retire to a paneled room and drink beer. He would drink whiskey, and generally, the other officers would drink beer. So, Smith said, "You've been invited to, as a new officer, have a sauna with the Ambassador." I said, "Well, I haven't met him yet." He said, "Well, you are going to meet him." So, I showed up and we disrobed and went into the sauna. I thought, "My God, I don't believe this, I'm meeting the Ambassador stark naked, and, the Ambassador is stark naked too." But, that is the way it was. It struck me as a very humorous. It was an Eastern European way to meet having met the Ambassador. John M, Cabot had a wonderful wife who really kept things going. Ambassador Cabot was on his last foreign posting. He may have had one additional posting, but he clearly was at the end of his career. I occasionally went with him to the Chinese talks, as well as the officer concerned, which was quite interesting.

The second Ambassador, who replaced Ambassador Cabot, after I was there, I guess, two years, maybe a year and a half, was Ambassador John Gronouski, the former Postmaster General of the United States, and a politically active Polish-American who, for his efforts on behalf of President Johnson, was given the Ambassadorship of Poland. He was an extremely colorful figure. He brought over with him a bright yellow, Buick convertible and a rather ravishing wife, who looked something like Elizabeth Taylor, and acted not unlike her. She would drive this yellow Buick convertible, around town and one time, a Pole saw this. He didn't know, of course, that she was the Ambassador's wife, but saw a good thing, and decided he would hop in the car. She didn't know Polish. But, the story went, she said, "Okay, buster, you want a ride, I'll give you a ride," and took off at great speed, screeched into the American Embassy compound whereupon the poor Pole, leaped out of the car as she was driving through the gates, ran off, never to be seen again. Gronouski was a very unorthodox individual, and that was my first exposure to a political ambassador.

Q: I realize you were down in the pecking order, but from what you were seeing yourself, and from the other officers, what was your impression of how he operated, and effectiveness during this time?

EVANS: Gronouski?

Q: Yes.

EVANS: Gronouski was pretty much of a clown. Since I had moved up to be the number two in the Economic Section, I spent a good deal of time with him, because he had a program of making economic visits to every province in Poland, and I escorted him with our wives. So, the four of us traveled a great deal. I probably spent as much time with him as the senior officers did, and what I saw, was not particularly flattering. I got a very strong impression that appointing people for political reasons, who are not particularly competent, was a great mistake. It was also a great mistake to send out ethnic Americans to countries where they had their family origin, because the countries involved didn't want that. They wanted a "real" American, they didn't want a Polish-American, or a Finnish-American, or whatever it was, that we invariably thought they would like. Of course, he didn't know the language. He could say a few words here and there. But he never made any sustained effort. Then, too, he was constantly having problems with his wife. She would disappear occasionally and an all-points search would be put out. It turned out, that one time, she had flown back to the United States, without his knowing. They fought a lot. They were a very tempestuous couple. But, I think they stayed together. He had very coarse manners, which the Poles did not appreciate. The Poles told us that they would have preferred someone elegant, a "real" American, someone who had good manners, table manners, and social manners. This was sort of insulting to send someone of this type out there. I am not saying he was a fool. He wasn't. He went on to become a Professor at the Lyndon Baines May Johnson School at the University of Texas. He taught a course there and was a Dean, mostly, I think, for his political work. But, he was effective in one way, in that he was dynamic. He got around. He shook things up. It wasn't as if he was a total disaster, from my point of view. But what was disappointing was his lack of refinement, and sort of normal, social behavior. He had a very erratic style, a lot of yelling. I remember being up on the top floor of the Embassy, and the door often being shut, with great yelling going on, mostly when his wife either came in to carry out a fight, or disappeared, in which case, there was a great deal of flailing around.

Q: Well, you left there in 1967 and wither?

EVANS: I would like to mention one thing before I left. It was related to the security issue. We at that time, we were living in a situation where security was a paramount concern. Initially we had a security officer who was quite normal. Unfortunately, the Embassy then got a security officer who was psychotic. He used to prowl the Embassy at night with two large black, sort of killer dogs. I don't know what they were, but they would scare the hell out of anybody who might be working late. He had a wife who he was honestly very ashamed of. She was very large and fat. The subject of my wife was brought up at a meeting run by the DCM under the first security officer who said that the appropriate committee was concerned about my wife studying, or going to the studio of a Polish artist. Somebody piped up, trying to take my side and, said, "For Heaven's sake, she is pregnant." My wife, at that time, was quite pregnant. The security officer leaned over and said, "Yes, but she won't always be." There was that type of mentality.

This second security officer called me one day, and said, "You are uniquely qualified to help me on a project, because you speak Russian as well as Polish. Can you come up to my office?" Well, his office, consisted of, a then, hi-tech place in the Embassy, full of tapes and other machinery. Meanwhile, he had brought Sea Bees and they were rebuilding the Embassy, and putting in wires and carrying cables. The whole Embassy had been taken over by these Sea Bees that were doing security work. He said, "I need you to listen to this tape, because I have been taping an entrapment." I then realized that our own security officer was taping the Polish security taping, which meant, that he could tape us, and probably was, because he had taped into the Polish security tapes taping. So, he could monitor any of us, who were being monitored by the Poles. Periodically, our security people would come through our apartment and tear apart the wall and try to find microphones. I think they finally did find a couple in the wall. There was a lot of this going on. Anyway, what I was asked to do, was to listen to this tape, and decide whether the young lady in question was a Pole speaking with a Russian accent, or a Russian speaking with a Polish accent. So, I sat down. He said, "Well," rubbing his hands with great glee, obviously relishing the thought of listening to this again, and showing off to me, he said, "Listen to this." He started the tape, and it began with noise of somebody in an apartment, and then a knock at the door, discussion, a man's voice, a woman's voice, door shut, more scuffling and noise, and eventually, unmistakable signs of people preparing to get into a bed. Then, the unmistakable noise of bed springs heaving and screeching, and the unmistakable sounds of people making love. All the time, I was trying to determine whether this girl was, in fact, a Pole with a Russian accent, or a Russian with a Polish accent. Apparently, that was very important for this effort. The man, being trapped, it turned out, was an Italian military attachï¿½. Well, I mentioned this, because I thought it was extremely interesting that we had this capability, and very disturbing, given the nature of this character, that this sort of thing was going on, and that he could be taping us too.

He was responsible for a very sad story. We had a young officer there who was Lithuanian-American, unmarried, never had been married, a dedicated Economic Officer. For whatever reason, the system decided they didn't really want this officer in the Foreign Service. They finally accused him of sexual impropriety because he had gone to a party attended by some Scandinavian secretaries, and he was drummed out of the service. We were all very sorry about this. This officer was a very fine person who died two or three months ago of prostate cancer. As I read his obituary, I could think of no person who gave more to his community, his church, then he did. Ironically, the security officer, this psychopath, who had drummed him out of the Foreign Service, shortly thereafter, was himself caught in flagrante, at a Swedish secretary's party, dancing around in his underpants, totally drunk and out of his mind. He was married, and that was the last straw. He was swiftly removed from the Embassy and ended up in the U.S. Postal Service, inspecting letter bombs, as I recall. There were many other very amusing, and in some cases, very disturbing security stories from that period, but this will give you some idea.

Q: Well, you left Warsaw in 1967?

EVANS: I left Warsaw in 1967, went back to Washington. I had been offered and implored to take the position of Consul General in Poznan, which would have meant two more years. I was very tempted to do it because as a newly minted FSO-5, I think this was an FSO-4 position. I would have had my own post, and Poznan was a very dynamic, exciting, cultural and economic place. But my wife clearly did not relish the idea. I also was offered the possibility of going to Russia, to Moscow. But my wife did not enjoy living in Communist countries, and we went back to Washington. I was assigned, initially to the six-month Economic Course, which was probably the best course that the Foreign Service Institute gave at that time. It gave you the equivalent of a master's, I think, or maybe a college major in economics. It was an excellent.

Q: Yes, it really was prestigious. It worked very well. You did that from 1967 through 1968?

EVANS: I did that from, whatever it was, July or August, through December 1967, then I went to INR, again. This time for a longer assignment.

Q: How long were you in INR?

EVANS: I was in INR from the end of 1967, and I left in the summer of 1970, so it was for two and a half years. This time I was assigned to the Soviet Economic Division, and given an extraordinarily interesting job replacing a fellow you probably know, Art Smith. The job was monitoring Communist shipments of military items to Vietnam. This opened up an extraordinary contact with the whole intelligence community because I worked very closely with the CIA, and the DIA, and various parts of the State Department in monitoring the shipments which were both by ship and by air. It involved a lot of highly classified intelligence, special intelligence; a lot of back room stuff, examination of photographs, markings, and keeping record of ships and ports and sources of delivery. It was actually quite a fascinating job.

Q: What was your impression? Was this an all-out effort on the part of the Soviets or the Chinese, or the Bloc, or was the feeling that this was a moderated effort? Was any conclusion made, about that?

EVANS: Well, that is an interesting question. I don't know whether it was moderated, but it certainly was not, I think, an all-out thing. It was a little bit of fits and starts, some stuff was good, some stuff wasn't; some stuff was new, some stuff wasn't, particularly the Soviet aircraft that were sent out. Then there was a big question about the stuff that was coming from Eastern Europe. For political reasons, there was a great deal of pressure to show that the Eastern Europeans were not sending military things. So, I had the sometimes unhappy task of telling people that it was military. The State Department, for whatever reason, at that time, wanted to show that what was coming from Eastern Europe was mostly military support, and therefore, should not block our assistance, or whatever other programs we had going on with Eastern Europe. Therefore, if there were overcoats, they were not deemed military things. If they were trucks, they were not deemed military. They were support. At one point, the CIA brought me unmistakable evidence that the Romanians were sending anti-tank grenade launchers. These were very sophisticated, very good anti-tank grenade launchers that would pierce armor.

Q: We are talking about, what I guess were called RPGs?

EVANS: Exactly.

Q: Rocket propelled grenades.

EVANS: RPG-7s.

Q: I have one at home.

EVANS: Well, you know exactly what I mean then. I wrote up this report, and sent it forward and immediately was reprimanded for revealing this, because the Administration wanted to get Congressional authorization to supply Romania with a heavy water reactor for nuclear energy. My processing of this information did not help. That was a somewhat surprising thing.

As I got more involved in the whole Vietnam issue, not just the delivery of arms but the actual progress of the war I realized that we were losing the war, and by all projections, we would lose the war. There was no way we could kill enough Vietnamese to win the war. That wasn't the way we were going to win the war anyway. I was reading all this data, writing it up and analyzing it. I thought I had documented it very thoroughly and come to a very sound conclusion. I handed it to the Deputy Director of INR. The next day, I asked him if he had agreed with the paper, and whether he had sent it on up. He pushed the paper back to me, and said, "I can't send that paper forward." I said, "What do you mean, this is very important, it shows that we are losing the war. The Secretary of State has to see this." He said, "We are under strict instructions not to send the Secretary of State any analysis that shows we are losing the war." I thought, "Good God, I do not believe this." That this was the policy: that the senior people were being purposely denied access to the truth or the facts. It was very disturbing. I referred to this many times in the past.

I was also in INR when the Tet Offensive began. We had a discussion about that and there were a number of people who thought this was a sure sign that we were going to win. My analysis was that this was a sign that we were going to lose. I saw the Tet Offensive as the major turnaround, the signal that the game was up.

So, INR was very interesting. It exposed me to a lot of intelligence sources and analysis, but, also pointed out a lot of political forces that were in play that did not always square with what intelligence and the facts would show.

Q: What was your impression of the intelligence apparatus from your perspective, of what you were getting, like the CIA, NSA, the DIA?

EVANS: It was amazing, but I was impressed with the breadth of it and, particularly CIA and DIA. I worked very closely with them. I used to come out to Arlington Hall and have a lot of meetings with DIA. I was impressed with the ability, the dedication, analytical skills, and the technical capability. I was amazed at what we were able to pick up through satellite photography and through human to human reporting. I was very impressed.

Q: Well then, you left in late 1969?

EVANS: Actually, it was 1970.

Q: Where did you go?

EVANS: I remember that I was at home, I think, in early 1970, when I got the call, "Would I be interested in going to Moscow?" Moscow was my ultimate goal, going back to my earlier studies of Russian, back in 1955, and this is where it was at. The only problem was, I knew that my wife didn't want to go. So, when I broke the news to her, or presented the question to her, she was very upset. At this point she had settled into a very good life. I don't think she had completed her master's degree, but she was working on it. She was teaching art. She was having shows. She is still teaching art in one of the Washington schools here. I didn't fully realize at that time, that she didn't just dislike going to Communist countries, she hated it with a passion. Her father took me aside and said, "David, do you really have to go to Moscow? Couldn't you just get a job here, or really, it would be better to quit the Foreign Service and do something else." I was appalled at this, because here was the fruition of all my life's work up until then, and of my studies and of my whole direction. I had gotten Moscow. Not only that, I was being offered the opportunity to go to Garmisch first, for a year of language there, and that was the more prestigious way to go, and certainly a nicer way to go. It caused a real problem. I consulted a lot of people in the family. This was the beginning, unfortunately, of a major problem in our marriage. Many marriages did flounder with Moscow assignments, particularly at that time. In the end my wife agreed to go unlike the wife of a friend of ours, who had a very similar career pattern, who absolutely refused to go to Moscow. Her husband came home and burnt his whole library of books about Russia and the Soviet Union, and everything. He never, ever forgave her. Of course, they subsequently got divorced. They had a very bitter divorce which mine was not. Anyway, we left Washington in the summer of 1970, and went to Garmisch.

Q: Could you describe the Garmisch experience? It was a year's course, it was called Detachment R, I think.

EVANS: Well, that name had stopped, I think. The Detachment R referred more, as I recall, to Oberammergau. By the time I went in 1970, it was the U.S. Army Russian Institute, not Detachment R. There were three State Department officers, and one USIA officer, and one CIA officer for five civilians in my class. Then, there was the regular Army class, which was a two year class for them. We were put in the second year, the senior year, as it were, with those military. The most memorable and unexpected aspect of Garmisch was that the Lieutenant Colonel in charge of The Russian Institute was a psychotic. I am trying to be accurate here in using words like that, but I think that is a fair description. He was the extremely bizarre type of military officer that you see depicted in certain films: totally irrational, knew Russian very well, was prone to great rage and hysterical reactions to the failure of students to perform the way he thought they should. It caused his military students, of course, a great deal of harm. I heard from them, mostly about his excesses. We were spared most of that, and I happen to speak Russian quite well, and he seemed to respect that and leave me alone. He was a bully, and unfortunately, one of the worst examples of a military officer. Garmisch, itself, of course, was a beautiful place to be, that goes without saying. The level of the instruction which was all in Russian, by Russian emigrates, was quite good, and their dedication to their work was very high. I liked and respected virtually all of them. Both the language instructors and the substance instructors, in political science, history, and geography met high academic standards. But, there was tension throughout the whole year, as a result of this Colonel's obsessive behavior. That made for a lot of personal and social problems; for friction between us and the military, very often serious. But, overall, I was pleased to be there and proud that I had been chosen to go to Moscow that way.

Q: Then, you went to Moscow from 1971 - 1973?

EVANS: 1971 - 1973, two year assignment, and I went into the Economic Section. By this time, I was permanently implanted in the Economic cone, which I had chosen, because way back in Warsaw I thought, that was the way that, ultimately, the Soviet system would crumble. I wanted to be in the economic end of it, because I thought it would be the key way to pursue my career goal of helping to bring down the Communist system. I think I was proven right in the long run.

Q: During your 1971 to 1973 period, can you describe relations? This is fairly early Brezhnev period. How were relations seen? Nixon was firmly in the White House, Kissinger was calling the shots, at that point.

EVANS: To the extent that, as you know, he traveled to Moscow several times, without the knowledge of Ambassador Jake Beam, another man of the old school, as was Ambassador Cabot. He, too, was in his last post. Relations in 1971 were terrible with the Soviet Union. They were exacerbated by a number of incidents on both sides, in the intelligence area, and in factions of the JDL (Jewish Defense League), for example, in New York.

One case was a JDL bombing of a Soviet diplomat's apartment. A fire bomb was sent through a window, and fortunately, for that Soviet, the child who was playing in the apartment, was not hurt, but could have been. It was viewed as a very serious thing. I think that occurred in July 1971. I arrived in Moscow with my wife and two small children. About three weeks later, our shipment of effects arrived. We were sent to live in a new apartment block, obviously just for foreigners, diplomats, and a few businessmen. We were one of the first families to be there, and at that time, they still had not completed the fence and the box where the militia men, the milimen, as we called it, with an extra key to monitor us. We had a very large, spacious apartment. It was not in the center, shall we say, and we had a car, because we drove in. But, we did not have a telephone for some time, which was very difficult. About three weeks after we got there, we were unpacking our shipment of effects, which was a great joy, and everything seemed to be in order. It got late. It was about 2:00 in the morning, and we were still unpacking the boxes. All of a sudden, the quiet night air was shattered by the unmistakable sound of glass and metal being smashed. I knew instinctively what it was. I ran to our balcony, we were on the eighth floor, and sure enough, looking down, I saw my car being attacked by three thugs wielding crow bars and hammers. They were systematically smashing every bit of glass they could find, beating in the hood, smashing in the doors, of my beautiful Oldsmobile, the first new car I ever had the luxury of buying. On the seventh floor, lived the junior Naval attachï¿½, Steve Khime. He rushed out to see what was going on. We yelled down to each other. I was so appalled, I didn't know what to do, here I was, on the eighth floor. My wife had bought a big treasure for her, which was a big plant, and it was in a pot. My reaction was to take this potted plant and hurl it down to these people. My wife stopped me from doing that. She was not ready to sacrifice the pot, and of course, it would not have done any good. Steve shouted, "Well, I've got my car. Let's go after the bastards." We raced down and got in his car. By that time, the thugs had gone off. Of course, I knew that there wasn't any point in doing it, but, just for the hell of it, we went to the local police station to make the report. I just thought that I would do it. As we drove in to the police station, I noticed a white Volvo parked there. It was the car with the three individuals, so we went ahead, and I said an act of hooliganism has been perpetrated on me, and my car had been shattered. This was about 2:30 at night. So, of course, the policeman said, "That is impossible, there is no hooliganism in the Soviet Union, and therefore, there can be no hooligans, therefore this thing didn't happen." "Well, it did happen, and, not only that, but the people who did it, are right here, because there is the car." Well, I guess it was lucky we got out of there. But, I called up a friend of mine, named Bernie Gordsman, who is the correspondent for The New York Times, whom I had known at Harvard, and I told Bernie about this, because I was very upset about it. He ran a story, which ran on the front page of The New York Times and The Washington Post, the next day, naming me, and one other American diplomat, who had also come with me and whose car had also been demolished. This was the first and only time I had been on the front page of The New York Times and The Washington Post. It turned out that this was a retaliation for the JDL bombing, and possibly, because it was publicized, and possibly because, which I didn't know at the time, work was already underway for the planning of the Nixon visit next year. That was not the last nasty incident. There were a lot of nasty incidents, harassment, and threats, and so forth, against American diplomats in Moscow.

I have to say, and I'm being very frank in this interview, that the reaction of the American Embassy was appalling. I found myself, the victim, having my car demolished. But I was taken aside by the political counselor, and very severely reprimanded for having spoken to the press about this. He said, "Don't you realize that bigger things are at play here, and things that you don't know. You just can't go popping off to the press." I think I was right. I think it was very beneficial that it was publicized. However, the State Department refused to pay to repair my car, nor would they lend me another car. The Embassy garage said they would work on what they could. I called PanAm and I called General Motors, and miraculously PanAm, at no expense to me, flew in the parts, and General Motors, at no expense to me, contributed all the windows, all the headlights, new hood, new side panels, whatever it was, the chrome around the whole thing. But, I remember Ambassador Beam saying, "It is unfortunate David, but those are the breaks of the game, and we can't be responsible for such things. I realize you are going to be out of pocket for this." I thought that was pretty shoddy.

When we did get our phone in, we were subject to a lot of threatening, weird types of annoying calls. The Cold War was very much on, which made living there miserable, brought home all my wife's worst fears, and, although she very gamely taught art at the Anglo-American school, the situation changed radically in the beginning of 1972. This was when we found out that Nixon was coming for what was the first pattern of summit meetings. This was in May of 1972.

Q: Could you talk about the Nixon visit and what you were experiencing, and, from others who were dealing with it, how it went. What sort of expectations we had for it, in that whole thing.

EVANS: The Nixon visit in May of 1972 was truly a seminal event in U.S.-Soviet relations. It was, of course, an absolutely momentous event for the Embassy. It affected the lives of, I think, every officer, and therefore, every family at the American Embassy in Moscow, in the months running up to the visit, during the hectic time of the visit, and then, of course, in the mop-up afterwards.

The visit was announced to those of us who were not in the upper echelons of the Embassy. I was number two in a three man Economic Section, as First Secretary. In those days, the Section Chiefs were called "Counselors," now they have been elevated to "Minister Counselors," and then there was a Second Secretary. So there were three of us in the Economic Section. We were told, I suppose, around maybe, late February or March, that this summit meeting was taking place. Neither we, lower down, and I think not even the Ambassador himself knew that the negotiations for this visit had been carried on secretly by Henry Kissinger. He had come over to Moscow, without informing the State Department, without the Ambassador's knowledge; had at some time, been whisked out to private dachas for meetings with the Soviets, and on one occasion, had actually, been living in the basement of SPASO House without the knowledge of the Ambassador . . . Extraordinary.

Q: Extraordinary, yes.

EVANS: What we did notice, about simultaneously with the announcement, was the remarkable change in our ability to contact Soviet officials. We prided ourselves, in the Economic Section, that, although, we were only three, compared to about 12 in the Political Section, on being a lean, mean, team. We had a very active and up-to-date Rolodex of contacts in the various foreign trade organizations, ministries, and business associations. But, we were really unable to contact people. All of a sudden, we were. The Soviets sought us out, gave us their direct telephone numbers, and when we called, they actually were there. We used the analogy that everybody who went through that period, did, simply: the red lights all turned to green. It wasn't an amber first. It was from red to green. Everything was "go", as far as contacts. The atmosphere that I had described previously, with my car being demolished, and the harassment that we had endured on the telephone, and that sort of thing, all abruptly stopped. That was very beneficial.

The visit, of course, was remarkable, in that it was the first Nixon summit meeting with the Soviets. This started a pattern of annual summits, alternating between Soviet Union and the United States, and continued on, pretty much, regularly, until the Afghanistan period, and has continued on up to this date. So, it was an historic moment, setting the precedent for these summit meetings, at which, the precedent was also established of preparing a whole raft of documents and agreements to be signed. The summit meetings had various purposes, and one was to conclude agreements, which, of course, had been negotiated before. The first START Agreement was signed.

Q: START, being Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty?

EVANS: A whole range of treaties were signed by Nixon, I think there were about six to eight, believe it or not: on arms reductions, in science and technology, in trade, which very much affected the area in which I was working. It set off the period of what we called "economic detente" because the Bilateral Trade Agreement was signed. In fact, the summit started the formal period of detente between the two countries Later, the trade agreement had to be ratified. There were problems with that, and a whole mechanism of implementing trade and economic relations was established, including the establishment of U.S.-Soviet Trade and Economic Council, which was to be chaired on the U.S. side by the Secretary of Treasury. There was also an agreement on the environment, and perhaps, cultural exchanges.

The preparations for it were my first exposure to the White House phenomenon. We were subjected to advance team visits and it was pretty obvious from the, almost fear, of the higher echelons, the counselors and the DCM, that this was something that had to be approached very seriously. I remember sitting in on one of the advance team visits when Haldeman and Ehrlichman came out, Haldeman being Nixon's Chief of Staff. He and Ehrlichman were referred to, among other things, as the two Prussians. Indeed, Haldeman not only looked it, but acted it. So, there was a certain amount of tension, pressure and almost fear, to make this thing successful, all the while, feeling that a whole lot of things were being kept from us that we didn't know about. So, we were trying to do the best we could to make the arrangements.

My involvement was in Kiev. Nixon was to spend, maybe two days in Moscow, and then a third day in Kiev. For whatever reason, the Economic Section and the Science Attachï¿½ were delegated to handle the Kiev visit, Kiev, of course, being the capitol of the constituent Republic of Ukraine. So, the Consul, Lou Bowden, and I, wend down together with the Science Attachï¿½ and some administrative people leaving the third Economic Officer to hold the fort in Moscow. This was a couple days before the summit, to set up the logistics and work with the Soviet authorities in Kiev. One of my duties, to give you an idea of the degree to which this thing went, was to prepare instructions for the President's briefing book on how to eat Chicken Kiev. The White House was convinced that, going to Kiev, the President would be served Chicken Kiev. So, I had to research this, write it up: how you put your fork into it at an angle, away from you, so that the hot juice inside doesn't splatter on your shirt; the history of Chicken Kiev. Well, of course, in the end, they did not serve Chicken Kiev. They served some sort of beef dish. But, that shows some of the attention to detail. Another one of the interesting things, was the clear precedence that Kissinger had over the White House, and that the National Security Council had over the State Department. Kissinger was housed in the best villa, or palace, or whatever it was. It was quite grand, and the poor Secretary of State, William Rogers, was housed, literally somewhere out in left field, away from the cluster of the main players.

Q: But Henry Kissinger was close to Nixon?

EVANS: Right. He had significantly better accommodations, wherever it was. I don't know whether we have time for any anecdotes about it . . .

Q: I'd rather have the anecdotes. We are in no hurry.

EVANS: One interesting, and I think, telling anecdote, that I learned from my wife and son, and other friends, who were at the airport, seeing Nixon off from Moscow to Kiev, since I had already gone down to Kiev. Nixon was really successful, and triumphant, after his ceremonial state visit to Moscow, but he had to fly to Kiev. The Soviets, as a matter of pride, wanted him to fly on their relatively new flagship aircraft, called the Ilyushin 62, which was actually a knock-off of the Boeing 707, and not a particularly a good one. The Secret Service, of course, was against this, and felt that the President should fly down on Air Force One, which was parked at the airport. But the Soviets said that this would be a matter of great honor for them if Nixon would fly down on their plane, the flagship of their Presidential fleet. Nixon finally said, "All right." He overruled the Secret Service, and said, "I will fly down on the Soviet plane." So, the band played and great hordes of uniformed servants loaded up the plane with food, Kosygin came out to see him off.

Q: Kosygin was the President. He might have been the President, and Brezhnev . . . I mean, I don't know, there was a formal President . . .

EVANS: Right. Well, I would have to go back and check, because Kosygin, for many years, was the Prime Minister. He might have become President at that point. Anyway, Kosygin was number two, basically, after Brezhnev, and he was delegated to come out, and come on to the plane to see Nixon off. So, the Nixon party arrived, and my son, who was then about eight years old, took a picture that came out to be Nixon's pocket, but, he always treasured it, because it was a picture of a coat, and it was Nixon's pocket as he swept by. Nixon got on the plane, and the band played, and everybody was saluting. The engine started and nothing happened, and nothing happened. There was a long, embarrassing pause. The protocol people were starting to sweat, and mop their brows. A lot of stirring around, and finally the engine stopped. One of the rear doors opened and this long line of equipment, and white coated women came pouring into the plane, and began taking off all the food, and carrying it over to Air Force One.

Q: Oh, God!

EVANS: Everybody said, "Oh, my God," you know. So, Kosygin had actually closed the door and bid farewell, but he was now standing there, and was beet red. He went up to the plane, I learned this later from friends, and went into the plane and said, "Mr. President, what has happened?" He was informed by the Soviets that the pilot refused to take off because one of the engines was not working correctly. He said, "Mr. President, this is absolutely a great embarrassment to the Soviet Union, and to the Soviet people," and all of this, "you tell us what to do with this worthless captain," meaning decapitation or whatever. Nixon thought for a moment, and he said, "promote him." Kosygin stepped back and said, "why?" Nixon said, "because he had the good sense not to take off." I thought that was an interesting story.

Q: Very interesting.

EVANS: Anyway, they arrived a little late. We knew there was a problem because we were out in the airport in Kiev, waiting with the cavalcade, and all the numbered cars, and that whole business. Kiev went smoothly and no Chicken Kiev disasters. I got a very nice letter from Nixon, in due course, thanking me for my assistance. We then went back to Moscow, and suddenly realized the whole ground had changed. We were now in a dialogue with a country, instead of being in a hostile confrontation. We were actually in a working relationship, with, if not a friendly country, an engaged country, and that was a major, major change.

Q: You know, when you look at it, with the great annoyance of, you might say, the Foreign Service establishment, at Henry Kissinger playing these games, secrecy, and all, but all the same, something did happen, with the Soviet Union, which is often forgotten because of the China opening. Something really did happen from the Nixon/Kissinger combination.

EVANS: It did. But there were painful aspects. I'm sure the Soviets wanted to keep Kissinger visits secret. And Kissinger liked to play his cards close to the vest too. Moreover, Nixon did not trust many others. He had his problems with the State Department too. Many administration people have felt that the State Department was not to be brought into key decisions. We all know that. In this case, maybe that's the way it had to be. But it was tremendously embarrassing and insulting to the Ambassador to have all this happen without his knowledge. For Kissinger to come live in the basement of SPASO House was extraordinary.

Q: The Nixon visit was in May of 1972, and you were in Moscow until when?

EVANS: I was in Moscow until July of 1973. I had come a year before, and then remained another year after the Nixon visit. The two years were like, if not, night and day, certainly radically different as far as being able to work effectively with the Soviets; travel, have business contacts. Suddenly doors were open and I was tremendously busy with American businessmen, who immediately got the signal that, now is the time to start doing business with the Soviets. I was just inundated with work that second year and our section was still only three people. There was no staff increase there. Much of what I did tended to be with American businessmen. I participated in some of the negotiations, not the actual negotiation, but the process of negotiation for our first multi-million dollar deal, which was a ten million dollar deal. This must have been signed, maybe in the late summer, or early fall of 1972. It was for Dresser Industries, a subsidiary of Kellogg, to provide a foundry for a truck plant. In connection with that, I went down to a town called Togliatti, which is where the main truck industry was located, in a horrible area of Tatarstan. Things like that weren't possible before. Then, we had the business of American companies wanting to open offices and to obtain accreditation. Occidental Petroleum came over. Arm & Hammer came over. In other words, the welcome mat was out. The green light was on and it was all systems go for American business.

One evening, I was working around 6:00 or 6:30 in the office, and the telephone rang. This American voice said, he had been switched to me by the Marine Guard, this American voice identified himself as an American businessman. He and a delegation of air traffic control people from Raytheon and Westinghouse, a high level group, had come in. But something was either wrong with their visas or they had been so naive with all this excitement that they had failed to get visas. Anyway, they had been impounded in a hotel out at the Sheremetyevo Airport which is used to house people at when they either don't have visas, or they don't have the right visa, or for some other reason. The Soviets wouldn't let them into the country and held them until their next chance to be sent away on another plane. So, he called for help. Well, this illustrated the difference with what would have happened a year ago. I called my contact over at the Ministry of Trade or the Ministry of the industry that dealt with that sector. In any event, within half an hour, I was informed that they were going to be let out of the hotel, and given a bus, and a hotel reservation had been made for them, in town. I was delegated to go out and see that all of this happened and to escort them in. Now, that sort of thing would not have happened prior to the Nixon visit. It would have been unthinkable.

Q: What were you telling American businessmen when they were dealing with the Soviets at this particular time, when they would come in? People who come from American business really aren't that well informed. Nobody was informed on this. What was our line and your personal thoughts?

EVANS: You are quite right. The three of us, and the Embassy in general, and some of the western embassies were probably as well informed as anybody, except the old time. There were a few old time traders who were trading in chromium, and that sort of thing, with the Soviets, going way back. Obviously, we told them it was a difficult market with great potential. We told them that financing was a problem, that Soviet money was a problem, although, ironically they had more money then, than many of the Russians do now. Many of the problems we are looking at now, some 25 years later, are almost identical to the problems we had to deal with then. Bureaucracy was terrible. Red tape was terrible. There was a maze of contacts you had to go through to get to the right person. But, once you did, and had the signal an agreement was reached, you could go ahead. Multiple trips were necessary to establish your credentials, your interest. The Russians were testing Americans, as they did, I think, with all Westerners to see whether they really were interested in this and whether they were prepared to pay up front the money required, if it was a joint venture. "Joint ventures" was the big word at that time. Joint venture meaning an arrangement by which the American would put up the money and hope eventually to get it out in some way. So, it was a process of not trying to discourage Americans, but sometimes to try to tone them down, and say, "Look, yes, the light is green. Yes, in contrast to a few years ago, we are supporting doing business with the Soviet Union. Yes, the Government is behind it. We have this bilateral governmental body. Yes, it is easier to meet with the Soviets now. Yes, they want to meet with you. But there are problems in financing. There are problems in production. There are problems in quality, if you are not buying a raw material. And most Soviet manufactured goods, were out of the question." So, the emphasis was mostly on selling. The machine tool builders trade mission came over there. We were inundated with trade missions, I think every major association, like machine tool builders, and electronic producers, and agricultural equipment, producers sent over trade missions, there was much wining and dining, and relatively little business done.

Q: Were trade controls your concern, particularly about advanced equipment, or anything electronic, or what have you, that the Soviets might buy a few of these, and (1) turn to military use, or (2) they might copy them? Was this a consideration, or was that taken care of elsewhere?

EVANS: That was basically done, by most companies, back in Washington. They complained to us about it. But that was basically done in Washington, I think. We either held their hand on the issue or explained from our point of view why this didn't make sense in our long-term national interest. It wasn't a problem that the Embassy dealt with so much. It was just getting businessmen together in a climate where for years, you have to remember, we were mortal enemies. The idea was suddenly to get people together when the Soviets wanted, as Russians do, to combine a lot of drinking and dinners with business. We also advised American businessmen to be prepared to be challenged, to be drunk under the table, and that sort of thing. If you could hold your vodka as well as your Russian counterpart, then that pretty well assured you of getting on.

Q: What do you do in a situation like this? It's all very nice to have these drinking contests. But, let's say, for medical reasons, or just for personal reasons, you don't want to get into that, at that time. How did one deal with it?

EVANS: The medical reason nobody mentioned to me. There were some people, obviously, who did not want to, or couldn't handle, more than a couple shots of vodka. We just had to advise them to either somehow make do, but to keep raising their glass, and not drink it down, to the bottom, the way the Russians would, and then ask for another, immediately. So, the advice, basically, was to keep up the game, don't pour cold water on the Russians, after having a good time. What you had to do, was, very diplomatically, reduce the amount of drinking, but be part of the party. If you were a party pooper, that pretty well put the kibosh on your business relationship. First, they didn't like people who were like that, and second, they thought you were a weakling. It was a combination of macho and hospitality. There were also elaborate feasts which were paid by the State and the State run foreign trade organizations, ministries, and State owned things. There were false expectations on both sides.

Q: On the working level, when you weren't dealing with these trade delegations, and all, could you go and meet the number four person in the Ministry of Agriculture or elsewhere, and chat with him or her, have lunch, that type of thing, that you would do in other countries? Or was everything sort of a State secret, as far as getting information?

EVANS: We were able to do that, but, generally in pairs. For instance, the Economic Counselor and I would generally go together. He would call up, or I would call up on his behalf, and say, "we would like to meet with the head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Ministry or the Foreign Trade Organization for lunch," and they would say, "fine." Or they would call us up, depending on where the issue was. That again was different. We were sought out a lot. This was for receptions and dinners, particularly for a reception type thing, which meant, showing up, maybe at 6:00, and going on until 9:00 with this huge groaning board followed by caviar, which was flowing like water, that's a wrong analogy, but there was a lot of caviar. These tables were laden with food. But one-on-one was still not really possible. Our Embassy didn't encourage it either. So, it wasn't just the other side. But, generally, two of us, either the Counselor and myself, or if it was a thing that the third guy in the section was dealing with, he and that person would go. Later, when the Counselor left, I became acting Counselor. So, then, I would take the lead, and go with one of the other two. We did not entertain socially. In other words, this did not lead to inviting Soviet trade, or economic or business officials to our houses. If there was an occasion, like a visiting delegation, the Counselor might host a reception. But just to have a couple to your house for an evening, to watch a film or something like that, was still not possible, at least in our area. There were some areas of the Political Section, that were able to do it. My wife, as I mentioned, was an artist, and we had some artist friends. So, we had some Russians in that field, who came over to the house. But, they were still followed, even after the Nixon visit, when they left, and harassed for coming to our apartment.

Q: When you weren't dealing with trade, the Economic Section, in many ways, was one of the major thermometers. What about this creature, called the Soviet Union was up to? There was all this emphasis on the political side- you have 12 people in the Political Section and three in the Economic Section. That represents the way we dealt with the Soviet Union. It was who was standing where on the Kremlin reviewing stand, or the Red Square reviewing stand. But, at least 50% if not more of what caused the breakup of the Soviet Union was the economy. This is the high Brezhnev period, but the economy was not producing the way the European economy was. How were you looking at it? We are talking strictly about the time you were there, 1971 - 1973, or so.

EVANS: Well, one of the first things the Economic Counselor did, the very first thing he did after the Nixon visit, was to submit a request to the State Department for more people. This was for the Economic/Commercial Section. I am proud of having been a major player in seeing to the establishment of a commercial office. It was in a building down the street from the Embassy. I recently talked with the Commercial Minister Counselor - at that time, it was headed by a Commercial Attachï¿½ - and the building is still there. That was the building I was largely responsible for getting up and running as a commercial office. We realized that we would have to have more people because, suddenly, economics, trade, and commercial relations were on the cutting edge. The political area remained sort of the way it was. But, I chose, purposely, when I was in Warsaw, to go into the Economic cone, because I felt that that would be the cutting edge of bringing down the Soviet system. I think I was right. That is what put the pressure on Gorbachev to make the changes.

Q: We are talking about the late 1980s?

EVANS: Right. So, the seeds were germinating. What did we see in the early 1970s? We saw this tremendous disparity between the Soviet military might, the space accomplishments, the research centers, and the civilian sector. The money going to science, the favored position of the Committee on Science and Technology, which contained the key people. Kosygin's son, I think, headed that committee. We don't know a lot about them. We knew that a lot of them were KGB types. So, there was that level. But, the rest, the 98% of the country, was floundering along, in less than Third-World status. You could drive through the city and see buildings that had holes in the walls. The way the concrete blocks were laid, they were not lined up, and there were air holes between them. Our building, where my wife and I and our two children lived, was a brand new building when we arrived, in the summer of 1971. It was way out in the boondocks. We were certainly in the city. But it was a 45 minute drive to the Embassy. It was surrounded by this sea, absolute filth of mud, which, on occasion, would be almost waist-high. The idea of landscaping a building was totally alien. The building was set in an absolute wasteland of muck. The dirt was unbelievable. I don't know what it is about the Soviet system or Communism, but, dirt in Communism is so much more filthy than anywhere else. It was part of the grease and the grime. The total lack of attention to anything. They started building a building next to us, and when we looked out the window, watching this, my children were fascinated. They would drive up in these old trucks, and, of course, the trucks were absolutely caricatures of trucks. It was amazing they moved at all. The trolley cars were packed with poor people stuffed in. Everything was decrepit, barely able to work. We watched out our window for several days as they were building something next door, which they eventually gave up on, which was typical. A delivery truck of bricks would come, all piled in, and then the truck would tilt up, and dump all the bricks. In the process, about half the bricks would break. At that point, a slew of, maybe, 15 workers would appear, and would load the broken bricks back into the truck by hand.

You had this tremendous disparity between national security achievements and the life of the average person. My colleagues would say, "How can they possibly have the GNP," estimated by the CIA? "How can they possibly be growing at this rate, and how can these figures be right?" Just your visual observation would lead you to believe that this was a decrepit economy, which was equivalent to something in the remotest part of Africa. Yet, we were told by the CIA reports that this was a booming economy; that investments were high; trade was expanding, and building was achieving greater goals. It was hard to believe. It was total nonsense. Sixty percent of glass shipped in the Soviet Union broke before it arrived. Seventy-five percent of fresh vegetables rotted before they got to the market. The waste was absolutely staggering. Now, people say, "Well, how come the CIA misjudged it so much?" One reason, and I do remember talking about this, at the time, in the early 1970s, was that the CIA prohibited its economic analysts from visiting the Soviet Union. So, all the reports that the CIA produced, were based on the statistics they were able to get, and they got most of those statistics, where from? . . . the Soviet Union.

Q: Is it just that they didn't want their CIA people to be exposed to the Soviet Union, I mean, because of fear of their divulging things?

EVANS: That's right. They were so afraid of a CIA person being compromised, drugged or hit on the head, or God knows what. Remember my previous stories about the Polish blondes. I suppose they still were worried about Russian blondes. If we have time, I'll tell you an interesting story on that score. In any event, it was well known, that while we had a CIA station chief in the Embassy and there were CIA officers there, they were not primarily doing economic reporting as far as I know. They were doing personal contacts and developing resources, and analyzing the traditional, political type things. I remember maybe when I went back to Washington we were told that the CIA can't send economic analysts out. The Big Red mentality was still there. It was shocking.

Q: I used to hear from people . . . I had never been in the Soviet Union, that this place wasn't working. I had spent five years in Yugoslavia in the mid-1960,. I thought, this sure isn't paradise on earth. And then people coming from the Soviet Union, would say, "This is great, this is paradise." All of us would kind of wonder, well if this place can't put it together, why is it such a worry? You would even hear of some visiting Americans, who were not officials, who would say, "You know, nothing works. These people are not 10 feet tall."

EVANS: That's right.

Q: When you went there, did you sense that there was, almost a confrontation, between the CIA analysis and what the Economic Section was doing, or was the Economic Section so busy, that it really wasn't looking at the withering Soviet Union?

EVANS: I have to admit that it was a case of the latter, particularly after the Nixon visit, because we were focused, almost entirely, on commercial relationships. That was my major role, dealing with the American business community and that sort of thing. The number three man in the Embassy was the one who did the reporting on Soviet domestic economic scenes, such as it was. But he was generally pulled off for our commercial work. We were three people dealing with an onslaught of business people in Delegations. We were also dealing with messages coming out of Washington - take care of this group from Texas, take care of this homebuilders association, take care of the concrete makers, and, it was just flat out. So, there was very little economic analysis that we did. What we did do was to try to reflect the reality and to show some skepticism. I remember in the quieter periods of trying to take the reports that would come out in the Soviet press, which, of course, were then used by the CIA, and adding comments as a standard way of reporting. We did it mostly by typewritten airgram. So, you would report an announcement or an event and then comment: "Based on our observations, it is hard to believe this is even one fourth the production claimed," or something like that.

Q: Did INR, which was the intelligence branch of the State Department, play a different role? The economic side of the INR was it more or less, depending on the CIA? Or did it even play any role, as far as you remember?

EVANS: Well, I had come out to Moscow from the economic office of INR, but I was dealing with military shipments to Vietnam. I do not recall, even when I was in INR, let alone, when I was in Moscow, that we got much of anything of value from INR about the Soviet economic situation. In retrospect, I think it was a black hole that was . . . "neglected" is the wrong word, but there were so many other priorities. This dichotomy between lofty achievements and the obvious visual reality that everybody saw, for some reason, was just not brought sufficiently to people's attention. In a way, in a perverse way, I think, the United States officially wanted to believe that the Soviet economy was doing better than it was. Let's say, if I were to have written an analysis saying that the Soviet economy was actually to the point of breaking down, I'm not sure the embassy would have transmitted it. I can't be more precise, or say why, but there was a two super-power thing. There was almost the feeling: "Well, if they are our enemy or protagonist, then they have to be a worthy protagonist." We ascribe to them a level of economic achievement, that we almost knew they didn't have. But we didn't want to admit they didn't have it.

Q: How about with your colleagues and the rest of the rest of the diplomatic community? I'm thinking about the French, the Germans, the British, and others. In a country, such as the Soviet Union, there tends to be much more collegiality, because they are having such a rough time too. Let's continue to focus on the economic side. Was there anybody running around, say from the Finnish Embassy, or Uruguay Embassy saying, "What are you people worried about? They've got a big army. You have to have a big army to deal with them. But at the same time, this place is falling apart."

EVANS: Each section, whether it was economic, political, or press and culture, and, to some extent, consular, had close relationships with its diplomatic counterparts in the Western community. We had, I think, monthly, maybe bimonthly, semimonthly lunches with our economic colleagues from the Western embassies. The French, the Germans, the British, the Dutch, were always very close to us, the Italians, and then others. I would say that, without exception, the Americans were the most well informed about what was going on, and that the other embassies eagerly looked forward to these exchanges, as a way of pumping us for what we knew. Everybody looked up to America because America had signed this trade agreement that put us in a preferred situation. The French and the Germans were sort of jealous of this. They were trying to catch up and tag along, with this opening of dï¿½tente. We were the lead motor in this Western trade opening and detente. More than that, I would say, without hesitation, that the training, language ability, dedication of the American Embassy officers was way in advance of any other embassy there. Most embassies knew that and admitted it. So, we generally were the ones sought out for both factual information and for interpretations of events. If there was an announcement in the press about a certain thing, inevitably we would get calls from our Western colleagues, asking, "Well what do you think about this?" "What does it mean," that sort of thing. I don't remember discussing with other embassies this dichotomy or the contrast between the alleged, official economic achievement, and the obvious failure of the economic system to function. We all would get together and have stories about how decrepit things were. The mainstay of any of these diplomatic encounters, whether they were a luncheon or a dinner party, or an informal get-together, was swapping stories about the most atrocious thing that had happened to people that week. Some of them were funny when you talked about them. But most of them were horrendous at the time. Hideous communications problems. Horrible building problems. Awful telephones. Nothing worked. You were lucky, during the day, if you had a list of, say, 10 things to do on a Saturday, once you got out of the embassy, if you got one of those done. You felt that it was an accomplishment. We couldn't find things. Suppose you wanted something for your apartment. Forget it. Or maybe there was one shop somebody had heard of, across the town. You got there and it was closed for repairs, or something of that nature.

Q: You mentioned you had sort of a story about provocation, or something of that nature?

EVANS: This was quite a story, yes. This is before the Nixon summit. Naturally, all of us going into Moscow were thoroughly briefed about security concerns, and at that time, prior to the Nixon visit, in the summer of 1971, when I went in, the KGB was very active. We had to be on guard for things. Never travel alone. Very often, for example, some of the new officers were delegated to accompany the military attachï¿½ s on their trips. I might just mention that, because it was an interesting trip, that I took within a month of getting there. I was told that I was to accompany a Marine major on a trip to Murmansk by train. My cover was that I was to write a report on the Murmansk ship building industry, or something like that. But, the real point was to get to Murmansk because of some Soviet Naval activity going on. So, we got on a very nice train car, with beautiful Oriental carpets and women making tea in the hallway, beautiful wood, polished brass compartments. We settled in and some sort of heavy looking types got on who settled into the next compartment. My military colleague told me who they were. In fact, the two of them knew each other. As soon as Soviet citizens get on a train, they immediately take off their good clothes, hang them up, and change into jogging suits, and then, for the duration of the trip, which I think was three-days and two nights, everybody pads around in these jogging suits. As we were going along, the first day, passing through some woods, the military attachï¿½ seated himself, facing forward, and I seated myself facing the other way. He indicated to me that I should not talk about what he was doing, and he produced a camera. He started taking pictures out the window. Each time he did, he would cough very loudly. The first time, I was trying to figure out what he was doing, but he said he was trying to cover the sound of the camera going off. We probably have much more sophisticated cameras now. I realized what sort of thing we were on. Well, we finally got to Murmansk, and, of course, we were noticeably followed by a team of three people, including one woman. I couldn't quite figure out why there was a woman. But, the attachï¿½ dragged me on top of a hill, so he could photograph the harbor from there. I remember this woman, who had high heels on, struggling gamely to come up through this rocky way after us. Anyway, we went back to the hotel. I think we only had one night in the hotel, and as we were getting ready to go to bed, my friend produced from his bag an enormous stash of empty Coca Cola cans (I thought he had a rather large suitcase for a one night visit). I looked at this in amazement. He piled them all up in front of the door like a pyramid. He said to me, "If somebody comes in, we'll know it." So, we went through this cat and mouse game. Unlike Poland, where there was access to women and access to people, there really wasn't that much chance of being compromised in the Soviet Union unless there was some really exceptional situation, where you were isolated, and then approached.

After my car was demolished, and before we had a telephone put in, one night, and again, long before the Nixon visit was on the horizon, in the fall of 1971, we showed a movie to some of our Western friends in our apartment. At that time, the embassies behind the Iron Curtain got movies from the military, which we showed at home, for entertainment, since it was almost impossible to go out. We would invite other Westerners over, and they loved it. So, we had these informal parties. On this particular night, I showed a vampire film, called The Return of Count Yorga, which I heartily recommend. It was really quite scary. One guest actually got so scared, she went and hid behind the sofa, as the film was nearing its conclusion, which had two beautiful girls chomping each other, one of whom, was a very striking blonde. By the time the guests left and we went to bed, it was 2:00 in the morning. We had had a lot to drink, inevitably, at a party like this. I went into a deep sleep. I was woken up by a frantic pounding at the door of our apartment. At this point, no telephone, no car, no milimen, and no blue box outside, no fence around the building. So, the first thing I thought was, "My God, somebody from the embassy is trying to reach us." So, I went to the door, and then, I had a sudden feeling, "Well, maybe it isn't quite right." Something from the movie, some sound of danger from the movie came back, and before I opened the door, I said, "Who's there?" There was sort of this muffled scuffling, and this female voice said that she needed help. So, I called for my wife, because I immediately sensed that this might be a problem. My wife was absolutely, totally out of it. I went back to the bedroom, and I couldn't wake her at all, after the party. So, I went back to the door. I talked, again, through the door. She said, "Help! I need help." So, I opened the door. I was in my bathrobe, bleary-eyed, and now it is 2:15 in the morning. There, standing outside, was probably the most striking blonde I have ever seen, in long blonde hair, she must have been about 5'10", at least, very good looking, probably early twenties with a brand new trench coat on, with all the epaulets and stuff on, which was rather short. It came down above her knees. She had very shiny leather boots on that came right up to the knee. We looked at each other, and I was trying to clear my head. I realized the girl looked identical to the blonde girl in the film. I was determined that I was not going to go out in the hall, which is what she seemed to want me to do. Again, I wasn't going to let her in. First, I thought, maybe this is some sort of Swedish nanny who has gotten lost, because we had a Finnish nanny, but some friends of ours had a Swedish nanny. But, this was no nanny. Then, I realized, and all of this is going through my mind, we were way out in the sticks, how could some girl dressed like this, even get there, get through all the mud and muck at 2:00 in the morning, with no taxi cabs? She obviously was delivered. She didn't seem to want to come in though. The first thing I thought was, "She is going to come in, and try to compromise me. Well, my wife and children are here, that is ridiculous." Then, I noticed, behind her, there was an alcove where the trash shoot was, and a shadow moved. She noticed that I noticed, and she said, "Oh, that is my friend, Irene." Getting more excited, she said, "You come." She tried to get me out into the hall. Well, I realized that "Irene" was probably Boris, or somebody of that nature, so, at that point, I slammed the door in her face. There is no peephole, which was a big fault of the embassy. They should have had a peephole, but I don't know what happened. I slammed the door, double-locked it, and went back to bed. The next morning, I got up and told my wife about it. She looked at me and said, "You've had too much to drink." I said, "Come out in the hall, maybe there is some proof of it." We went out into the hall, and looked around. There was nothing there, no earrings or anything. We had put on our door, as a little indication that this was our place, an antique, lion's head door knocker, belonged to my grandfather, I think, and I was very fond of it. It had been ripped off, the screws had been pulled out, the splintered wood was there. So, somebody was angry, and obviously, the girl had failed in her mission, which I think, was to beat me up, probably, because I had reported the car. This was shortly after I had reported the car. I do think that if I had gone out into the hall that night, I would have been beaten up, possibly kidnaped, I don't know. It was pretty scary, in retrospect. But, what was interesting, and I believe this, that they sent this girl because she looked like the girl in the film. How could they know what the girl in the film looked liked? It meant that they had to have surveillance capability of the interior of the apartment. Well, later on, in about a year's time, we discovered that, in fact, this was what was going on. One of the American businessmen who had come over was in his apartment, and he had dozed off, and woke up at about 5:00 in the afternoon, and he saw this tiny red light, coming out of a hole in the wall. He reported it to our security people. They went over, and tore the wall apart, and found that this was a laser video monitoring system. The Soviets were capable of some very definite scientific achievements. They could monitor the whole interior of the room, day or night. I honestly believed that in some way, this was no coincidence that this was an obvious attempt to try to get me, following the showing of this movie, and that the woman was like the one in the film. An average person would say, "My God, what paranoia." But, that is the sort of thing that you had to deal with there.

Q: Is there anything else that we should cover, do you think? Oh, I can't remember, if in our last time we talked about it, but, did you go to these, I don't know what you call it, "people's lectures" dealing with economic matters? I have talked with other people, Horowitz, and others, who used to go to these lectures.

EVANS: Actually, no. Ed was there, when I was there. He was in the Political Section. With their manpower they were delegated to go to these things. The economic counselor refused, as a matter of principle, to have us do that sort of thing, because he said that we are busy enough. My poor boys and I, are too busy to do that sort of superfluous thing, and so, we did not. I would say, those of us in the Economic Section, were out meeting more real people than the Political Section. These lectures, of course, were all propaganda sort of stuff. Although, they tried to gauge the reaction of the audience . . .

Q: I was told the questions were much more revealing than not.

EVANS: Right. I remember Ed doing that sort of thing, his language was good, and he liked that sort of thing. We went out, on an average of six nights a week, and, generally, at least two events each night. It was extraordinary because of all this commercial stuff and everything. There was a wide range of activities.

Q: Okay, one last question, and then we will finish with the Soviet Union for this time. What about electronic surveillance, microwaves, and this sort of thing, was this an issue when you were there, or not?

EVANS: You mean, of the embassy?

Q: Yes.

EVANS: We didn't know it, but, obviously it was, and I'm very bitter about that. Extremely bitter about that, because the Soviets were bombarding the American embassy with microwaves to try to neutralize our radio collection facilities on the roof of the embassy. But this was kept secret from us. Now, when I arrived at the embassy, in 1971, I noticed that the whole front of the embassy was shuttered up with iron sheeting. When you went into the embassy, it was like going into a submarine, or something. You went down and you didn't see any light. The whole front of the embassy was covered with this metal sheeting. Well, they said this was for security purposes, so people couldn't take pictures. In retrospect, it was obviously to protect the people working on the front, from these x-rays, as we found out later. The State Department, of course, knew, and the Ambassador knew, and was told not to tell us that this was happening. Now, if this isn't criminal activity, I don't know what is. If a company had done this, they would have been sued to high heaven, and the damages would have been extraordinary. The Economic Section was on the back of the Embassy. The counselor's office actually had a little balcony off of it. Although we realized we could be photographed, we sometimes waved to people. I liked to see the blue sky. I insisted that my window be open. The security people would come around all the time and tell me to close the shutters. I'd do it, then I'd open them again. But, afterwards, when all of this came out, I put two and two together. The Minister Counselor lived on the front. His wife died of cancer a few years after. The Science Attachï¿½'s office was on the front. He died a few years later. One of the two Agricultural Attachï¿½'s whose office who was on the front, died. The General Services Administrative officer died. Coincidence, who knows. But that's not the State Department's finest hour.

Q: Well, we'll pick this up in 1973. Where did you go when you left Moscow?

EVANS: I began a very exciting time. As a result of the Nixon visit, I was asked to go to the White House to serve on something called the Council on International Economic Policy, which was a relatively new council, that had the same status as the National Security Council, but dealing with international economic affairs.

Q: All right. So, we will pick it up in 1973 at the White House.

EVANS: Very good.

Q: Today is the 24th of January 1997. David, how did you get the White House job? How did it come about?

EVANS: As I was approaching the end of my two years, there was some noise about staying on a third year. But my wife was not enjoying it, and for family reasons, we were ready to leave. I began the process of looking for a new job. The Commerce Department wanted me to come there in a new capacity dealing with the Soviet Union because of this trade agreement that had been signed with the Soviet Union during the Nixon visit and the expanded activity. That, normally would have been a good job, but I had seen that Nixon had created, the year before, a new body within the White House, called the Council on International Economic Policy. I thought, "I bet they need someone to do" . . . what essentially, I would be doing at the Commerce Department, to keep track of U.S. economic and trade relations with the Soviet Union. So, I put feelers out, I got a response back. The White House sent out Jonathan Rose, the son of Nixon's law firm partner, who was then the legal counsel to the Council on International Economic Policy. He came out to Moscow to interview me. So, I took that as a good sign, and in due course, I was advised that I should, indeed, report to the White House.

Q: Did you have the feeling that you had created your own job?

EVANS: That's right.

Q: I mean, sometimes these things happen. In looking for an opportunity, you say, "Fellows, you need this, and I'm here."

EVANS: That's exactly what I did, to be frank with you. I was rather pleased with myself. It was a great opportunity, and I had excellent, rather unique credentials, coming out of Moscow, in commercial work and with the groundwork that we had been doing there.

Q: You were doing this job from when to when?

EVANS: I went to the White House, technically, in August of 1973, until September of 1977, four years.

Q: Okay. Can you give a feel for the atmosphere . . . We will do the White House, in general, later. But, the atmosphere of this Council, this new thing. They are going to beat the world. How did they feel about the Soviet Union?

EVANS: Well, it was a frantic environment. I thought Moscow was frantic. But I was not prepared for what I would find in the White House. The Deputy Head of the Council, was someone you may know, Deane Hinton, who was on loan from the State Department. He ran it day-in and day-out. The head of it was political person, Peter Flanagan, who had started off in the Office of Personnel in the White House, was a New York investment banker, and still is. Originally, the office of the head of the council was over in the West Wing, but, by the time I had arrived, the whole operation had been moved over to the Old Executive Office of the President, and we sort of correlated with the National Security Council. The National Security Council, of course, didn't think that. But in many ways that's what we did on the economic side; pulling together policy and preparing and pulling together policy options. I was unprepared for the tension that existed in the office that reflected the overall tension of the White House. Of course, there was a beehive of activity, as relatively new organizations are, everybody took everything very seriously. I came to realize very quickly they were proud of their annual report of the President on International and Economic policy. This council was a funded, congressionally mandated government agency within the Executive Office of the President.

When I went in to see Deane Hinton, I felt that this was a great honor to be working at the White House. I went in to pay my initial call on him but he was extremely busy although I finally got to see him. There was a great deal of scurrying around, and secretaries slamming out of offices, that sort of thing. I said that I was very glad to be here, and to be joining the Council's staff. Deane Hinton looked at me, and said, "You won't be." He leaned over and then said, "This is a shark pool here." He wanted me to start the very next day. I had just gotten back from Moscow and had some home leave. My wife and I had planned a two week vacation to go up and see her family in Canada. Deane Hinton was outraged that I would want to take my home leave, and wanted me there right away. By and large, this was the end of August, I didn't think this was a particularly busy period, but I suppose they wanted me to cover other people's vacations. Unfortunately we got into a bit of an argument right off the bat. I refused to give up my home leave. We had this trip planned. Deane Hinton was absolutely outraged that I was taking a vacation. He said, "I haven't taken a vacation in 30 years," or something like that. Well, I thought maybe he would have been better if he had. In any event, I did it, and I came back. I came back, unfortunately, under a little bit of a cloud with him. I was then taken around to meet the staff. They were very nice people, although there were some not so nice people, too. Of course, I had not realized the full extent of the wave that was about to crash on us all at Watergate. Mind you, this was now September 1973, and Haldeman and Ehrlichman had been let go in April or May of 1973. The siege mentality was very much in force at the White House. So, that was an overriding consideration. Meanwhile, the economists on the staff were busily frantically producing the President's International Economic which was due to be published and presented to the Congress in February of 1974. By that time, in September, I was shown around to all the various sections of this Council, which was very formally divided up into Direct Investment, and then there was a guy who did Strategic Trade. He and I were up quite a lot, because, of course, because I did East-West trade, and economic relations. It was a very high pressured, ulcerating, secretary crying, temper losing environment.

Q: What was the attitude towards approaches to the Soviet Union? I mean, not your attitude, but, you might say, what you were getting when you first arrived?

EVANS: I quickly got thrown into the internal inter-agency battlefield, that to some extent, still exists. Commerce, Defense, State and Treasury were the agencies that I dealt with. The most interesting thing for me, and a very important thing, was moving from being a State Department Foreign Service Officer to being an inter-agency coordinator with White House authority, cache and urgency behind me. So, that if there was a position that had to be reached on an inter-agency basis, we followed the mechanism of the National Security Council. We would hold an inter-agency meeting and come up with an options paper for the President. Now, the State Department and the Commerce Department, not surprisingly, and to some extent, the Treasury Department, were pretty favorably inclined towards expansion of trade with the Soviet Union. The Defense Department, at that time, was quite wary of it. This came up, of course, in regard to export controls, primarily of anything remotely relating to complicated technology, so there were meetings about grain shipments to the Soviet Union. There were meetings about the Export-Import Bank, and its method of export financing. Then there was the whole question of whether certain projects should be backed in our international interest. There was also consideration that what may be good for trade between the two countries, might not be good for our own national interest. Those were the aspects of the job that I was dealing with, plus preparing my section of the Council's report, pulling that together that which related to East-West trade. That was just a very small section of the Trade Section of the report.

Q: Where were you to start with, and if there was any development afterwards, where were you coming down on this East-West trade? One can be very optimistic or very pessimistic about it. You had been in the belly of the beast, seeing what it was doing, and knew that the concerns of the military were not unfounded.

EVANS: Well, that's true, but, overall, I guess I would have to say that my philosophy is the old saw about which is less dangerous: a fat or a lean Communist. I felt that unless something was flagrantly against our national interest, by-and-large, the benefit of the doubt should be on expanding trade. It was in our long-term interest that the Soviet Union improve its economic standards, and standards of living. In the end, there would be more security than starving them and humiliating them. That was my own feeling, and basically, that was what the Council staff and the Council leadership seemed to be pushing for. Of course, the Nixon White House was still in the aftermath of the 1972 summit, and then the 1973 summit, which took place just before I arrived, in the summer of 1973, when Brezhnev had come to Washington. All of that had generated a great deal of forward movement for closer ties, and Kissinger, who was running the National Security Council, and his sidekick, Hal Sonnenfeldt, were very keen on pushing this economic detente, as we called it. In one area for example, developing Soviet natural resources, particularly their oil and gas industries, I was very active. The question there was whether we should try to get liquefied natural gas out and shipped to the rest of the world. The argument that Peter Flanagan made to the President, and to the Cabinet, the inter-agency body, at one point, was that we would all be better served if there was more oil globally available on the market, and therefore, although the Defense Department didn't like it, he argued that we should help the Soviet oil and gas industry to develop their extraction, refining, and shipping capabilities. That lead to the pipeline decision to pipe natural gas to Europe. The project I was particularly working on, which I had begun by talking to the representatives in Moscow, was called the Northstar project. That was a major, multi-billion, seven billion dollars or something, project to ship liquefied natural gas on tankers from Murmansk. It was to be brought up from Central and Southern Russia and Siberia, through a big series of pipelines, liquefied and put in U.S. tankers and exported. It never saw the light of day. We are still today discussing certain arrangements that are very similar to that with the Russians and encountering the same problems of inexperience, or inability, bad equipment, bad down hole technology, terrible funding, and their inability to somehow get their stuff out of the ground, efficiently.

Q: As you started dealing with this gas, oil deal with the Soviet Union, was it sort of eye-opening to realize the state of the Soviets? I mean, they've been one of the first great oil producers. How were you viewing that?

EVANS: Yes, they did produce a lot. But they wasted an incredible amount. If they had been efficient about it, they could have doubled their production and exports. The waste, the inefficiency, the misuse of what technology they had, the equipment they got, was just appalling, and to a large extent, still is.

Q: Did the Economic Council feel any repercussions of the Watergate period?

EVANS: It was very much a part of all of our lives, absolutely. I ran into Nixon several times, and my office, actually, was right next to the Vice President's office, because President Nixon had his office in the West Wing. It wasn't until Jimmy Carter brought Mondale over to the West Wing, that that changed. I was there under the three Vice Presidents, Agnew, Ford, and Rockefeller. My office was, literally, right next to the Vice Presidential suite, overlooking the West Wing. The tension of Watergate was palpable. We were somewhat isolated from it because we were not in the immediate White House itself that was feeling the heat. We were a little removed, being international economics. But Peter Flanagan carried the title of Special Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs, as well as Director of this council. He was, obviously, getting more and more tense as the situation worsened. I ran into, as I say, Mr. Nixon several times, and it was clear that Nixon was deteriorating under the strain of all of this. We would also hear demonstrations and there were jokes about doubling the guard, and battening down the hatches. A lot of people, more on the political side, did spend their nights there, holed up. There was a siege mentality. No doubt about it.

One incident I might mention is somewhat telling and somewhat amusing. When we finally got our report prepared for the year 1973, we had a meeting with the President in February of 1974 in the Oval Office. So we were all spruced up and told when to be there. This was to formally present our product to the President, the International Economic Report of the President. Every year, by the way, the imaginative editor of this report had a system of changing red, white and blue covers. This year, I think the cover was red, just by rotation. It was quite a good report with a lot of colored charts and graphs. It was a unique document, much sought after at the time. We all trooped into the West Wing and as we went in, we were each given a souvenir: a Nixon pen in a little box with his signature on it. We stood behind the desk and waited and waited. Finally, about 15 minutes later, the door burst open from Nixon's little private hideaway on the side and Nixon stormed into the office, glaring at everybody, snorted and asked what was going on. He went over to his desk, sat down, hardly looking at us, clearly in a foul mood, clearly an upset person, and said, "All right where is it?" Peter Flanagan gave it to him, and said, "Mr. President, I'm pleased to present to you, for you to transmit to the Congress, the International Economic Report for 1973. So, Nixon takes the report and looks at, and says, "God dammit, to Hell. Why does this thing have a red cover? The first year our trade is in the black, and you have a red cover on this." You could have heard a pin drop. Everybody was sort of going, "Who, me?" He grumbled and grumbled and finally signed the thing but sitting there grumbling the whole time. We were all terrified that the emperor was going mad. So, then he got up, turned and scowled at us, saying, "Did you all get your pens when you came in?" We said, "Yes, Mr. President." He said, "Well, that's good, because you are not getting anything more out of me." With that he stalked off and slammed the door.

Q: Were you able, afterwards, to relate where he was, sort of in the Watergate context?

EVANS: Nixon was under a great deal of pressure. I can't remember now, but at the time, as we looked at it, the noose was tightening, and he, obviously, was feeling this. It was a couple months after that, that he started to not be there at all. In May or June, he disappeared completely. Eventually we were told that he had gone down to Florida for rest. There were rumors of some sort of treatment. General Haig, Chief of Staff at that point, was actually running, not only the White House but was running the country as well, which was not terribly known. Everything that was signed by Nixon was signed with the automatic pen. A few things might have been flown down to him. But, basically, Nixon was out of office in that May/June period. Then, he came back and there was a quiet period in July, as I remember. It just was getting worse and it was getting to the point where every time I came home, my children would ask what was happening. It was sort of embarrassing to say that I was working at the White House. I knew it was all going to come crashing down. There was no doubt about it.

I remember the morning of August 8. I received certain documents in my office, one of which was the President's daily schedule. This would come out the evening before or first thing of the day, I forget which. It said, "President's Schedule," and it was a completely blank white piece of paper. This was a rather interesting document. I still have it in my files. The morning of the eighth, we got a call to come over to the East Wing, because there was going to be a very dramatic statement by the President. I raced over, knowing instinctively that this was going to be very important. It was Nixon's famous farewell address to the staff, which was probably one of the finest speeches Nixon gave, apparently, off-the-cuff, no notes. There was some sentimentality about his mother, as you may recall, and her influence on him, and this sort of thing. It was a very dramatic statement, relatively free of accusation and rancor, looking back over his years, and how he had tried to serve the country. If I had to list the 10 most momentous moments in my life, I think I would include that. It was a spellbinding performance. Although we knew something was going to happen, I certainly was not privy to what had been happening behind the scenes nor of Nixon's final decision to resign. So, this was his resignation speech. He and the family went out on the lawn and took off in the helicopter, with the famous waves. I really thought I was part of history. It was such a momentous event. We all trooped back to our office, saying, "This is a terrible thing, now what?" We had never had this happen before. Jerry Ford, of course, took over, very quickly. That transition was very interesting, and went very smoothly. Jerry Ford, I don't think, has gotten the full credit that he deserved for handling that very difficult decision, of which, the famous or infamous pardon of Nixon was a part.

Q: I think it was essential.

EVANS: Right. Then, I stayed on, from August of 1974, for another three years, to September of 1977.

Q: Was there any particular change in focus during this Ford period?

EVANS: Well, I'm not certain about the focus, but there was certainly a change in lifestyle and atmosphere at the White House. Jerry Ford was a very nice man. He actually came around to our offices to shake hands with all of us, which was extraordinary. He also sent out a memo to all the staff to spend more time with our families, and not to sleep in our offices overnight, the way the Nixon crowd had been, and to leave promptly at the end of the working day, 5:00 or 6:00 at the latest, and spend weekends with our families. That was very important, and we all appreciated it. I look back on the Ford years, until January of 1977, as really a very nice, and actually, a very productive time in the White House. Our council never had a new director. Peter Flanagan left. He was one of the few senior Administration officials who was not touched in any way by Watergate. The Council was not part of that at all. Kissinger had been appointed by Nixon to be Secretary of State and Brent Scowcroft was head of the NSC. Our Council had actually come into great prominence in the last few months of Nixon's administration because he had appointed Kenneth Rush to be the overall international economic czar. I guess George Shultz had left, I am trying to remember the sequence. Shultz had been the supreme czar, and he was Chairman of our Council, as well as Treasury Secretary, as well as Counselor to the President for Economic Affairs. He was one of the major players in the U.S. Government. Then, Kenneth Rush came in, and was given all of those titles, except he was not Treasury Secretary. We then worked with Kenneth Rush, whose name doesn't mean that much now. At the time, I would call up and say that I was calling from Ken Rush's office, Mr. Rush is Ambassador, or the Honorable, or whatever, and people would really hop to. That was much more relaxed, under Ford. Your calling from the White House didn't carry the same imminent execution that it did before, so you would have to coax people a little bit more into meetings, whereas before you could just say that a meeting was going to be held, and show up, or else, and they did. Now, you sort of had to explain what the meeting was for, who was going to chair it, what the subject was, that sort of thing. Again, it was much more pleasant to work in that environment. I look back on it for my own area and the council in general, was expanding contacts and taking some rather bold initiatives with some of the Eastern European countries, which were on the bottom of the bad list, like the Czechs, the East Germans and the Romanians. Nixon, of course, liked the Romanians. But, the Czechs and the East Germans, particularly, were at the bottom of the heap. In our council we decided to take some interesting steps there. One of the final things I did under the Ford Administration in September 1976, was to go out with the then Director of the Council to Hungary, which was the first White House visit to Hungary since World War II. It was part of the whole process that lead to Hungary returning the crown of St. Stephen. It was a very productive period and I was extremely busy. We got ourselves involved, to the annoyance of the National Security Council, in making contacts with and seeking to promote more normalized relations with these Eastern European countries.

Q: During this whole time, what were your relations with the National Security Council?

EVANS: Well, we thought we were equal. They looked down their noses and thought that we were newcomers.

Q: You were in trade?

EVANS: Yes, economics types. There is nothing worse than being in the economic area of our government. There was a rivalry that was imbalanced, in the sense that they had the upper hand, because the National Security Council has a great, very powerful position. Individually, we got along well. Occasionally, I would run into trouble because I had a habit of writing down in memo form, some of our activities, meetings, and initiatives, and sending around the White House. On some occasions, the National Security Council would call my boss and say that I had just gotten off the reservation. But he kind of knew me, so, I continued to have the meetings and to write up memos. The National Security Council had its own international economists, however. Two of them are now much in the news: Fred Bergstrom and Bob Hormats. Bob Hormats, you see analyzing evidence from his position at Goldman Sachs, and on CNBC. Fred Bergstrom was on the TV last night, I saw him being interviewed about something. So, there was a definite rivalry there and we were playing catch up to a certain extent.

Q: How about relations with the Defense Department, how did they weigh in? This must have been a constant battle, or a difficult relationship.

EVANS: Anything that smacked of trading with the enemy or furnishing high technology, caused a great deal of heartburn. We would have inter-agency meetings to resolve disputes and sometimes protests, to the National Security Council. We did have the Treasury Department on our side since our Chairman was, by law, the Secretary of the Treasury. We had a fairly strong position with Shultz, and then with Bill Simon, who were really in a much stronger position than the Secretary of Defense. So, there was a lot of intrigue. I made a lot of enemies, I'm afraid, at the State Department, because I would have to procure and espouse, and often take positions that were essentially Treasury positions, which the State Department didn't like. I guess, I would have to say, that Treasury and Defense were more often on one side, and Commerce and State were on the other. Treasury would raise flags about certain trade deals with the Soviets they thought were not worthy of being approved, or raised certain concerns about repayment, that sort of thing. It was basically that Commerce they would do everything possible to sell them anything on the easiest possible terms. That was their mandate. They were under pressure from American business. The State Department, for political reasons, had a similar approach. It wasn't until the invasion of Afghanistan, that things cooled.

Q: Yes, December of 1979.

EVANS: Through all this period of the Ford Administration, and the early years of the Carter. But even before Afghanistan, Brzezinski started to put the brakes on some trade expansion. We were gung-ho, as far as pushing East-West trade.

Q: Did Congress play any role . . . I mean, did Congressmen come in and say, "How come this company in Ohio sells widgets, and the Soviets want widgets, so god dammit, sell widgets?"

EVANS: Yes, that was a large part of my job. In typical bureaucratic fashion, soon after I was there, I hired an assistant so that he could answer a lot of these things. I got a very bright, young fellow over from the Commerce Department, on loan, to be my assistant. He handled a lot of that stuff, but, all those letters that came to the White House, would come to me. So, that was a major, major thing, absolutely.

Q: During this time, four years in government, in one job, is a very long time. You had real historical perspective. Did you see any changes in the Soviet or in the Eastern block?

EVANS: Well, things were thawing, very definitely. I mentioned Hungary, as one case. We thought we were instrumental in improving relations with Eastern Europe, and Czechoslovakia, in particular, and continuing this push with the Soviets. It was practically a love fest with the Soviets, to the extent that I felt so many times that it was going a little bit too far. I went over to Moscow about four times a year, either with the high-level government exchange delegation, or one of the subcommittees that were formed. It was an incredible job, because whenever any U.S. inter-agency team went over to Soviet Union that had any sort of economic content, I automatically had the right to go. Generally, the Director wanted his office represented, and the White House wanted a representative there. I had that function, of representing the White House on all these various subgroups and working groups that were set up under the U.S.-Soviet Trade & Economic Commission, which the Treasury Secretary, on our side, headed. There was a tremendous amount of going back and forth, and the Secretariat on the U.S. side was in the Treasury Department. No, actually, it was moved to the Commerce Department because they had the manpower to do it. They then created a whole new bureaucracy with a new Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for East-West Trade and an office for East-West Trade. That was the beginning of the Commerce Department's involvement in promoting trade to the Soviet Union, and then Russia.

Q: What was your impression of the Treasury Department at that time? In general, they have a reputation of being rather lean, a very astute, tough department, and Commerce, has, almost a curse, and it may not be fair.

EVANS: To a certain extent, it was fair, because the quality of Treasury was clearly better than the quality at Commerce. That is not to say that some of the top people at Commerce weren't good. But there were an awful lot of people, lower down, who weren't. Also, it was just so big, it was always difficult dealing with Commerce. Yet, they were hard workers. I had many good friends and colleagues over there during that time. But, clearly, the average level of the Treasury Department people was much higher.

Q: In there, you were really dealing with a tricky business. We are talking about your particular branch of foreign economic sales and all. That is, you were dealing with someone who was not considered benign. In many ways, relations with the Soviet Union seemed to be more on the upswing. We had been bruised badly in Vietnam and at least we weren't as optimistic as we once were. What was the role of the CIA in this, or did they play any role?

EVANS: Not that much. We advised and were in touch with the CIA on two different levels. One was strictly information: getting information we required for our report in an unclassified format, on a global basis, going beyond the Soviet Union. Then, we had a more classified relationship when we had to call an inter-agency meeting, or take an inter-agency position, and come up with an inter-agency recommendation. Then, we would call the CIA and they would participate in the meetings with us. I remember one particular one, which I think I was asked to chair, and the subject was whether economic and trade sanctions were effective ways of dealing with countries that were behaving poorly. That was a hell of a bear of a subject. Basically, my recollection was the State Department said that this was the right thing to do. I guess the Treasury Department did too. I never thought that economic sanctions were the right way to go. It was sort of a cop out. The CIA felt very strongly, and what I remember most from that exercise, was the CIA and I being on the same position in opposition. Everybody else said, "Yes, trade sanctions are an efficient and viable tool of U.S. foreign policy," rather than being critical.

Q: I've always had the feeling that trade sanctions is a way of saying, "Don't just stand there, do something." It is sort of a moralistic way of not spilling any blood and we usually end up by shooting ourselves in the foot, economically.

EVANS: Well, there is that, and there is the question of whether they really do any good. Whether it is Saddam Hussein, or Milosevic, or whoever, certainly the people at the top stay in power, sometimes they even solidify power. It is the poor Joe citizen of the country that suffers the most. Of course, as we all know, trade sanctions are notoriously porous, as our Western partners don't believe in them the way we do. That is where the shooting of the foot comes in. We would end up losing contracts and losing economic footholds in these countries for this principled stand, that we won't deal with these awful people. Meanwhile, the Western Europeans and the Japanese do deal with them and keep up their relationships. There were two reasons I was against it. There was that, and sanctions really didn't seem to bring regimes down. They seemed to end up hurting the people more than was justified. That was one time where I did work closely with the CIA, over a sustained period of time, putting that Presidential decision paper together.

Q: How did your paper come out?

EVANS: Well, it was compromised, because the response was, "I guess, this was too strong." There was some paragraph saying that the particular nation was to continue the use of trade sanctions with a descending sort of view in it. I was not pleased with how it came out. It was impossible for it to come out any other way.

Q: Were there any issues or incidents, that particularly come to mind during this time?

EVANS: Well, there was Jerry Ford's losing the election. We had prepared his foreign economic policy position but also had gone into some other areas, because I had served in Poland, and worked with the Polish briefing papers. As you may recall, it was Ford's mishandling of the question about Polish freedom that lost him the election, to a large degree. I remember that incident very well, because I had gone through and checked out the texts. At that point, the NSC and our council worked very closely. The NSC would send the briefing papers for us to look at which was remarkable. They would not have done it under Nixon. We worked very well together. Don Rumsfeld was the White House Chief of Staff and did an excellent job. Bill Seidman, who you also see on TV...

Q: I have interviewed him.

EVANS: Seidman was the Assistant to the President for economic affairs. As such, he was in our chain of command. All of these people were fairly nice and accommodating. At dinner, that night, I remember the dining room table at home during that debate, when Ford seemed to have misunderstood the question, and answered in a way that was then turned against him. I grimaced, I remember, at the time, thinking, "My God, he knew it, but didn't get what was in the paper."

Q: I can't remember the exact question, but he seemed to say that Poland was a free country, which did not sit at all well with the very influential Polish vote in the United States.

EVANS: What he meant was that Poland would never be dominated by Communism in its spirit. That was the point in these briefing papers that Poland was occupied by the Soviet Union, as it were, but that, basically, the Polish people were, within themselves, a free people. It was something like that. It was more, probably a too far-fetched subject, and you could just see Jerry Ford thinking, "Ah, Polish briefing paper, Polish briefing paper: Poland is free." I grimaced at the time, and everybody looked at me, and I said, "Oh no, that is not the way it is." So, that was one incident. Then, the famous gaff of Earl Butz for telling a racially-charged joke on an airplane. I was in this thing, because had Ford won another term, I would have gone out as an Ambassador. I was being pushed to go out as a DCM. We were very much involved in the campaign, and in the whole reorganization and staffing of the State Department. Then, Ford lost. As Sherman marched into Atlanta, Carter marched into the White House, and literally, they tore it apart.

Q: Can you talk, just a little bit, about January 20, 1977? What happened?

EVANS: Oh, it was brutal. Hamilton Jordan was the Chief of Staff, as I recall, and they were out to draw some blood. They went around, ripping down pictures, tearing things out of offices, running off with furniture, trashing files. I probably shouldn't admit this, but one of the perks I had was a color TV. I had risen up to be an Associate Director of the council, and attended Cabinet meetings. I was actually at an inflated level in that construct. Well, all that came crashing down, and they came around confiscating things from people's offices. The one thing they decreed that nobody should have was a color television. Well, I had a color television. Certain senior people were authorized to have a color television set. They came around and took mine. It seems like a small thing. But it was just symbolic of the mentality. Then, within a week, they said they were going to abolish the council and we all would be fired. Of course, I would then return to the State Department.

Q: Was this done Congressionally?

EVANS: Exactly right. They had not done their homework. So, we pointed out to them that they couldn't abolish the council. They couldn't fire us because we were congressionally mandated. Our authorization bill ran through September 1977. So, they were going to have to live with us. They gnashed their teeth and decided they would. They were out, particularly, for two bodies, our Council, which was linked to Nixon as a Nixon organization, because, you see, it had been established under Nixon. The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, PFIAB, and these two bodies were seen as expendable. They, of course, ended up not being able to touch PFIAB either. We were virtually shunted aside. All of a sudden the phone stopped ringing. We were in purgatory and demoted. We were set up in unattractive office space. We had to double-up in rooms, the usual way of democratic shunning that goes on in a case like that. We lasted out our term, which was in September. Of course, the political types who knew they were going to be terminated in September, mostly jumped ship. Many of them did get good jobs around town.

I stayed on, pending negotiation of a job, which turned out to be a call to go out and work for Larry Eagleburger in Yugoslavia. It was a bit of a come down from the heady days of Nixon, particularly the Ford administration. We were truly, I think, on the cutting edge of a lot of these issues. We were ostracized in that early Carter period.

Q: Go back to the end of the Ford term. How effectively did you think our efforts for initiatives, not just in the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union, but around the world was, during this Nixon/Ford period? I mean, you were making these reports . . .

EVANS: Well, I thought we were quite effective. I guess it was not surprisingly that we had a very energetic economic policy, much more pro active than now. The Under Secretary for Economic Affairs at the State Department was Bill Casey, who also was Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and brought a lot of activity and clout to things. The Treasury Department under Bill Simon was very dynamic and there were initiatives in all parts of the world. What Simon did at the Treasury Department was to take the U.S.-Soviet Trade and Economic Commission as a model for bilateral government commissions in other countries, typically more on the totalitarian end. We set up one with the Saudis, which was a very active thing. We were very involved with energy policy and global energy affairs and policy. I, frankly, think there was much more focus on international economic matters, than there is now, I think the Council helped do that. Of course, the agencies, like State, and Commerce, particularly State, was in this because they felt that they were the ones to do this. NSC resented us because they felt that they had their economists and their staff, and that was enough. You didn't need a whole other council. They felt it was superfluous and redundant. I thought it was a good idea because when Clinton first came in he created the National Economic Council (NEC) at the White House. It was not just for economic affairs but has the same function as our old council. Bob Ruben was its first head before he went over to Treasury. It was to pull together a national economic policy, including an international economic policy. One of the two deputies is for domestic, and the other is for international economic affairs. It amuses when I read articles about global interdependence and that we no longer can afford to be just introspective, that we have to realize that we are going to have trading partners around the world. This is what we were saying 25 years ago. We were trying to get embassies energized into promoting U.S. exports and to help U.S. businesses to gain footholds, to counter foreign government subsidies, especially what the Italians and the Japanese were getting. These are all issues that are still being talked about today. It was very active, this period.

Q: You went to Yugoslavia all over?

EVANS: Yes, I was sitting at my desk one day, and the phone rang. It was Art Worster.

Q: Yes, I know Art.

EVANS: Art Worster was the Deputy Director General of the State Department at that point for personnel. He said that Larry Eagleburger wanted someone to go out to Belgrade. There was a problem with the economic counselor who had initially been assigned out there. He wanted much more of an activist, because he wanted to focus on economic relations with Yugoslavia. He asked me if I was willing to go out. I said, "That sounds great," because I had been in Yugoslavia, and still spoke the language, and I knew Belgrade like the back of my hand, and knew the country pretty well. I said, "When should I go out?" He said, "In the next two weeks." I did, but it was another nail on the coffin of our marriage, I am afraid. Although, I had hoped that my wife would come out, she did not, and that pretty well set our course on our eventual divorce. She did not join me for the two years that I was out there.

Q: You were there from?

EVANS: 1977 to 1979.

Q: What was the situation in Yugoslavia during this period, both economically and politically?

EVANS: By the time I went out, Yugoslavia was in an economic boom. Typically, most Yugoslav families had two cars, but sometimes they had more. Most had a country place, or a place on the coast. If a Yugoslav woman of any sort of decent urban level wanted new shoes, she would go to Italy. If she wanted fresh fruit, she would go to Italy or Austria. They were living high off the hog. In fact, one of the things we did was to start writing about conditions. I went out as consul under Larry Eagleburger who was determined to focus heavily on economic areas to make this a major mark on his ambassadorship to Yugoslavia. When he was there earlier he was a junior economic officer.

Q: He was number three in the Economic Section. I was offered his job when he left, and I stayed as Chief of the Consular Section.

EVANS: People in the U.S. talked about Larry and Macedonia. He thrived on the job, so he and I really became sidekicks. I was very close to him. We used to play tennis every morning. Then I would have breakfast with him, and we would go into the office together. We traveled around the country together. When I got there, he said that he really wanted a push and that he wanted me to visit every republic, which we did, plus the two autonomous republics. That was three republics that we each did and we encouraged trade missions from these republics: Bosnia was one, Slovenia another. All of these were constituent republics. It was a very busy period. The Yugoslav economy was booming. But what people were only beginning to realize was that it was a false economy. It was based on excessive borrowing and, sooner or later, it was all going to fall in on itself. As long as Tito was alive, people kept lending more money to Yugoslavia. When I first got there, Tito was in reasonably good shape. He started to deteriorate in 1978. It was in the fall of 1978 that he took a fall. It was then apparent that he was having trouble. I left in October of 1979 and by the time I left Tito was a very sick and failing individual. In that first period, prosperity rang. Yugoslavs had money to burn. There was tremendous building; banks were lending money; U.S. banks were coming in, right and left. Ironically it was a field day. Yugoslavia was hailed as the one free-market economy country in the East Bloc complex in the Warsaw Pact. We didn't even consider Yugoslavia to be communist because they were not on the watch list of bad countries. In fact, when I was working on things like that, they were virtually in the Western camp.

Q: When you came out there, this was a great time, everything was booming. At the same time, when you arrived there, since you had not been following this, in particular, you were kind of the new boy on the block, even though you went back to your college days. Were you getting reports from the Economic Section, or anyone else, saying, "We better watch this?"

EVANS: Oh, yes. One of my bright, young economic officers was Bill Montgomery, who you may know. He became Ambassador to Bulgaria. And Chris Hill, who is going to be the first U.S. Ambassador to Macedonia. I had a very bright bunch of boys. I say boys, because they were quite young. I supervised nine people. It was a big section. The bulk of the CIA was also working for me too, ostensibly. We were very active. People were coming and going all the time. But, yes, it was Bill Montgomery, to his credit, who took me aside, shortly after I got there, and said, "Look, maybe you can help me sell my analysis; 'the sky is going to fall in.'" Larry didn't want to sell it. He didn't want to say that the sky was going to fall in. We had a hard time getting this view across, but we did. It was one thing I felt bad about. I backed Bill, signed off on these airgrams, they went out. Occasionally, I signed off on them, and they just went out, without being cleared, which caused a problem, but they were late. As it turned out, Yugoslavia was living way beyond its means. The thing that was driving all of this was Tito. Everybody wanted to treat Yugoslavia as well as possible, because Tito was there, and was friendly. As long as Tito was happy and anti-Soviet, that was the main thing. The sky started to change in 1979 but the euphoria still reigned in September of 1979, a month before I was due to leave. The World Bank and I held our annual meeting in Belgrade, first time ever that they met in a Communist country. David Rockefeller was there. Everybody was there. That got me involved with the Rockefeller people, particularly because the euphoria continued. Nobody wanted to see Yugoslavia go down the drain for economic reasons, so, the West kept pumping more money into Yugoslavia.

Q: I would have thought that you would find like-minded people, bankers, other embassies and all, beginning to look at this. There is psychology, but, also, there are the facts and figures . . .

EVANS: Most of these loans were short-term loans and most of them were guaranteed. Ex-Im Bank was running all over the place, guaranteeing everything. The only people who were going to lose would be the taxpayers, in most of these cases. Other deals were structured. I was there when the famous McDonnell-Douglas plane deal was made in exchange for ham. McDonnell-Douglas company restaurants were serving Yugoslav ham for years and years to pay for the DC-8 that the Yugoslavs bought.

Q: How did you find the Yugoslavs getting around the country, and all? How were you?

EVANS: If I do say so, I knew the country like the back of my hand. I traveled on a motor scooter everywhere, literally. I don't think there was a district of Yugoslavia that I hadn't traveled in. My language came back, within a month, I was fluent. I had a ball, as far as that goes. It was very friendly to Americans, basically. There was some harassment, but low-level, and we all knew that they were checking on us, but, in the economic area, there wasn't that much. I wasn't dealing with protestors, or anti-Communists or anything. Basically, on the other side, I got to know and become fairly friendly with Milosevic, who was Chairman of the Belgrade Bank, at that point. Larry Eagleburger and I would go out to his house and have roast lamb on a fire, and that sort of thing.

Q: How did you find his wife?

EVANS: I didn't ever meet her. It wasn't until later that I realized that he even had a wife, the famous Mira Markovic. He never brought her to any meetings, or traveled with her. I guess we knew he had a wife, but she was never brought out.

Q: How did you find Milosevic at that time?

EVANS: I thought he was very charming. Of course, he was a force to be reckoned with. We knew that Beogradska Banka, which he was Chairman of, was a front for the secret police. We also knew that he had an agenda. He was, nevertheless, very urbane, very cosmopolitan, quite sharp, not a banker, by profession, of course, but a politician who had been put in to head the bank, and to be a front man, as companies do, or put in a politician to get business. He went over to New York all the time. He knew America very well. He was always on the phone or his assistants were. We had instant access. He made Beogradska Banka the lead in dealing with matters affecting America certainly for Serbia, but not for Ljubljana, because Ljubljanska Banka was the lead Slovenian bank. Most Yugoslav bankers came from Slovenia, the real bankers. As far as we knew, Slobo was a good fellow, although one to be watched and one with obvious connections to the party and the secret police.

Q: What was your impression as you went around to the industries there? These were so-called "workers' owned" industries. What was your impression of them?

EVANS: Well, except for Slovenia, and some in Croatia, obviously, they were appalling, reminding one of what you saw in the Soviet Union. If you got down into Macedonia, for example, and Pristina, and certain parts of Southern Serbia, and much of Bosnia, it was very primitive, to say the least, primitive, inefficient, dirty, sloppy, all those things. The worst of Communism meets the worst of the Southern Balkans.

Q: Did this also ring warning bells when you thought that here was a country that is considered to be really moving?

EVANS: Warning bells were that this economic disparity was going to rip this country apart; not the ethnic thing. I still maintain that it was economic disparity that provoked and created the drive for Slovenia and Croatia to secede. It was not the ethnic conflict as much as it was the resentment of the north for supporting the inefficient, grubby, uncivilized south. The disdain that the Croats had for the Serbs was palpable and mutual. But, added to that, it was a strain on a cultural level. There was the religious difference, of course, but, what really burned up the Croats and the Slovenians, was that they were sending 85% of their tax dollars down to the damn Macedonians and Kosovars to waste and squander. They took the money and drank and ran around. That was the feeling and, to some extent, it was justified. Foreign exchange was earned in Slovenia and Croatia from tourism. Croatia was given the best slice of Yugoslavia. Another part of the terrible problem of Yugoslavia falling apart was that it had the whole coastline, and the heartland. How could Croatia lose? They had the main source of currency, which was tourist trade. Slovenia, of course, was protected and tucked up under Austria's wing. It was unfair that the Macedonians were left with a lot of arid soil and bad weather.

Q: While you were there, particularly toward the end, Tito was failing. What was the attitude of the Embassy, yours, Larry Eagleburger's? Who was the political counselor at that time?

EVANS: Initially, it was Mark Palmer, and then it was Harry Dunlop.

Q: I've interviewed Harry. What was the feeling about withering Yugoslavia?

EVANS: I don't know that there was one firm view. It was a constant question that we were all asking. I remember we were told that Yugoslavia had been added to the top five areas of concern on the CIA's global watch list, along with Iran, because of this uncertainty as to what would happen after Tito's death. Suddenly, by the end of 1978, beginning of early 1979, the question was not whether, it was when, and what would happen after Tito. The political people were focusing more on Soviet domination and a lot of scenarios were drawn up about moving western forces into counter Soviet invasions. There were certain Yugoslavs who were pro-western who said that if they didn't get out in time, they would be swinging from lampposts. On the political side, there was an actual fear of a possible Soviet military invasion. That was one option. The other was the breakup, along political lines; maybe the Soviets would grab a chunk and maybe we would then try to grab the coastline. But, it was all Soviet-oriented.

Q: The Soviet menace, as in so many other places, was part of the glue that kept a lot of stuff together, all over the world, including the Soviet empire.

EVANS: It wasn't until later, which we can go into, in my follow-up job back in Washington, that it suddenly became apparent that it was the economic area that was going to cause this whole house of cards to collapse.

Q: Unless there is something else that we should cover in Yugoslavia, maybe we should stop at this point, and we will pick it up the next time . . . you left there in the fall of 1979, and went where?

EVANS: I went back to Washington. After a very brief time over at the Board of Examiners, I was called by EUR, the European Bureau, to come over, and given a very interesting job as the Executive Director of an inter-agency task force, examining the "after Tito" question.

Q: One last question on this Belgrade thing. You mentioned being close to Larry Eagleburger. How was he as an Ambassador and to work with, as a manager?

EVANS: Oh, I thought he was wonderful. The Embassy functioned beautifully, morale was high. He was very personable, as you know, I'm sure. He was demanding, but very accessible. He was not full of himself. I thought he did an absolutely superb job. Yugoslavia was a must stop for high-level visitors and delegations, and a lot of that was due to Larry Eagleburger's almost magnetic personality.

Q: Today is the 19th of March 1997. David, let's talk just a bit about when you were with the Board of Examiners. What was your impression of the procedure? How did you go about it, and what did you think of the candidates who appeared for you?

EVANS: The candidates were excellent at that time, for the most part. There were variations, very noticeable variations. From the time I had last been exposed to BEX, Board of Examiners, as a young officer, I noticed many changes. Obviously, there were more candidates who were female, and relatively more minority members as well, and, in general, I think a diversity in backgrounds, training, education, from the time I came in. That was one strong impression. But they were, for the most part, when I saw them, all excellent candidates which was after they had successfully completed the written exam. This was focusing on the oral exam. The procedure itself had changed a lot from the infamous times of earlier years, when an individual would come in alone, and sit across from a three or five person panel and be grilled, something like Anthony Lake was, and made to feel embarrassed. We are all very aware of those stories. Of course, I went through that myself. Now, the individual appearance before a panel has ended. They are group procedures, spread over more than two to three days. We, as examiners, sat in, as it were, in this role playing scenario, as a team, of say, four candidates were picked to represent an embassy: an ambassador, a political officer, a visa officer, and an administrative officer. This team was given a scenario and had to react to it. Either there was a rebellion in the country or a fire at the embassy, or something like that. We mixed and mingled as examiners with these people and watched them over a two-day period, to see how they interacted with each other and how they took the lead roles. Of course, they changed lead roles during the performance. I guess this is a type of examination that is used in not only the foreign service but I think in business, as well. It avoids the one-on-one cross-examination in favor of a more in-depth ability to see how people act.

Q: Still, in 1979, you were with BEX, after Tito left?

EVANS: I did not seek, I did not welcome, and I did not like going to the Board of Examiners. It has a justified reputation of being a back water, and it was, for many people, a holding action. Fortunately I was there for only two months. Then, I got a call from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs who was responsible for Southern European Affairs, Bob Barrett, and he asked if I would be free to start immediately to head up a task force to look into the "after-Tito" scenario. This must have been about January of 1980. I came back in October of 1979. In January of 1980, I gratefully left BEX in Rosslyn, and went over to the Bureau of European Affairs, once again. I was ensconced in an office in the South Balkans, the Office of Eastern European Affairs, once called "EE." I was given the responsibility of Executive Director, Executive Secretary, something like that, of a rather ad hoc, NSC Committee or task force, not a committee, to develop strategies in preparation for Tito's death, which was now becoming more obvious that this was going to happen. This was fascinating because it brought me into contact with the military, with the economic area, with the political area, with the various elements of the NSC that come together for inter-agency meetings. I could draw on my former White House experience, when I was with the Council on International Economic Policy. I think that helped. Of course, I was fresh out of Yugoslavia, and through Yugoslav friends, had followed Tito's illness very closely, as we all did. I realized, from some inside information that I had, that he was much sicker than the authorities let on. He had stumbled badly on several occasions and was losing his balance. Our initial focus was very much in the military area and I worked very much with both the Political Military Bureau in State, and directly with DOD, and the JCS (Joint Chiefs of Staff) drawing up various contingencies. Believe it or not, we actually had contingency plans that would bring in NATO forces, (U.S., primarily) down to Yugoslavia to hold off or counter a Russian invasion of Yugoslavia. The major military scenario was that the Russians would see this as a chance to move into Yugoslavia.

Q: We are talking about January 1980?

EVANS: Right.

Q: In December of 1979, we had had this major move of the Soviets into Afghanistan, and so, putting this into context, there was the feeling that the Soviets were on the move.

EVANS: Yes, very much. It is interesting, in today's context, to look back and think that was our worry. But that was the concern, that they would move on Yugoslavia. We had actual airborne, Naval supported operations, and a tremendously complex scenario worked up, all of which seemed very logical. There was a lot of serious discussion about this. It was quite a busy time.

Q: Were you getting anything from the Soviet desk about what Soviet intentions might be, at that time? Do you recall?

EVANS: I don't recall getting anything threatening. In other words, there was no actual indication, that I ever received and I think all of my code word clearances were still in force at that time. At least as far as I was informed, or privy to, there were no indications of any Soviet forces massing. We were very sensitive to the overflight question. There was a feeling that it might be provoked by Yugoslav permission for the Soviets to overfly Yugoslavia, en route to some Arab state or something like that. But, I do not remember any particular information about Soviet forces massing near the western Soviet border, or anything like that. Obviously, that was a key concern but my recollection was this was all a contingency plan. It was not based on any perceived, actual threat.

Q: What was the reaction of the Department of Defense? We were still coming out of Vietnam. Did you find either reluctance or interest in doing something? Was this something that just tasked them, and it was done in a professional manner; did you find any sort of concern?

EVANS: I think it is fair to say that the State Department, the Political-Military people, were much more gung-ho about committing forces than was the Defense Department. In the meetings, the PM (office of Political-Military Affairs) representatives were the ones that were driving the train much more than Defense. I think this may have been part of that whole period during which the Defense Department was reluctant to be in the vanguard of seeking foreign engagements. Nevertheless, they were very positive players. There was none of the reluctance that we saw later, in more recent years under Colin Powell, of stating, basically: "We will not commit troops unless we are assured of victory." Easy in, easy out. There was no analysis at that time, of getting in and getting out. There was the feeling that this was one of the top priorities because this was a critical area for us. If the Soviets moved into Yugoslavia, that would open up a nice, soft, underbelly scenario. And so, it received a fair amount of importance.

Q: How long did this study last?

EVANS: It began in January and on a Sunday in May, May 20? I was working in my back yard at our house in the District and the phone rang. I got the word that Tito had died. It was a holiday. We had anticipated that this would be announced over a holiday when people are away and not in the streets. I rushed in and we flailed around with the various preparations that were to be made. At that point, my focus changed from contingency planning, of what to do after Tito, to organizing our delegation to Tito's funeral. Meanwhile, I had been informed by my inside sources that Tito had actually died in February and had been kept on ice, until he had been officially announced dead in May. I have no way of proving that. But I believe that it was true. It came from medical sources in the hospital where he was staying. By this time there had been a subtle change from the perception of the military threat to the realization that we were going to have to deal with an economic situation. This tied in very much to my previous function as Economic Counselor in Belgrade and my work on the Council of International Economic Policy at the White House. Even before his death there didn't seem to be any real grounds to think that there was going to be an actual military attack. There was increasing indication that Yugoslavia was going to fall apart economically. That would drive this internal division and the disintegration that we all feared after strong men asserted themselves in various rivalries. Of course, they had that revolving presidency mechanism set up. But I started working with Treasury, much more than the task force, and the EB Bureau, and outside bankers, and the Rockefeller people, for instance, Chase Manhattan was very much involved, that sort of thing. The focus, as I say, was on the funeral - this was a tremendous headache, and a real insight for me into how ridiculous the Carter White House was. Tito, after all, was a very important personage, and despite Yugoslavia being communist, we had, basically, been backers of Yugoslavia, since the 1950s. Yugoslavia was essentially our part of the world in that period. Obviously, a strong delegation had to go, but it was decided that the President would not go, that it would be inappropriate. And, for some reason, the Vice President, could not go. So, the head of the delegation was Jimmy Carter's mother, Ms. Lillian. Well, Ms. Lillian Carter headed the delegation. There were screams of protest from people who were knowledgeable about Yugoslavia, including David Rockefeller. Others pointed out that this was very inappropriate, that it would be insulting to a macho society and inappropriate inasmuch as Ms. Lillian was not exactly hitting on all sixes. But the White House was adamant. There were a lot of headaches about it. With much misgiving, of course, I had to do the work that was required. But it was a very disturbing thing to me because I felt, having been steeped in Yugoslav studies since 1959, and serving there that we should send a bunch of high-powered delegations to make various points, including points with the Soviets and with the Yugoslavs. You could say maybe this was the beginning of a shift in our priority from Yugoslavia. In any event, the story was that when the funeral delegation plane arrived in Belgrade, Ms. Lillian didn't know where she was. Instead of being appropriately attired, she appeared, coming out of the plane, in some flowery pink dress, or something like that, and promptly announced to everybody, "Where the hell are we," sort of, "What am I doing here?" It was just awful and the Yugoslavs were mortified, absolutely mortified. Anyway, we got it over with and I guess the damage was contained. But it was not appropriate.

After the dust settled from that, beginning in June, the work really focused much more intently on the economic area. I was involved in bringing over foreign ministers and economic and finance ministers. The urgency about what was going to happen passed. Yugoslavia had stuck together. Problems now seemed to be economic and internal, not the Soviet threat. The military's preparations were all put on the back burner. At the end of June, the task force was disbanded.

Q: Were you looking at all at the Franco regime, because Franco and Tito, in a way, both fancied the same thing: who was going to succeed as the strong man. Franco prepared the way and it went well, Tito had not. Were you looking over your shoulder at the Franco transition which really had taken place only about five years before?

EVANS: No. Maybe others were, but I don't remember that ever coming up at all in the context of our discussions.

Q: As you left this problem, you had now been looking at it rather closely. In your perspective at that time, wither Yugoslavia?

EVANS: Well, I thought it would hold together, although, it was very obvious that this rotating presidency was not very satisfactory. You had the six republics and the two autonomous republics which were part of the Serbian republic; a total of eight people who had to rotate through this collective presidency. We used to joke about the number of presidents. It was ridiculous because you had the President of the Presidency and then you had the Presidents of each of the six constituent and two autonomous republics. Then there were Presidents of the government, Presidents of Parliament, Presidents of this and that. There were something like 1,000 Presidents in Yugoslavia and they all felt very important.

What ultimately sank Yugoslavia as an integral country were regional economic rivalries and the divisions rather than the so-called ethnic and religious divisions. They came as a secondary thing. But the first thing was, after Tito, the Croats and the Slovenes saying, "We want out of this thing. We are tired of paying 80% of our taxes, doing 80% of the work and paying 60% of our taxes to the south. This has to stop." The Croats, of course, saw this as a chance to get out from what they felt was the Serbian domination. But mostly, it was economic. The Slovenians, who had most of the banking experience and were highly regarded in national banking circles, started laying the groundwork to distance themselves from this economic mess. Yugoslavia had been living high off the hog. In our earlier discussion, I mentioned the work that some of my subordinates had done, pointing out the tremendous economic problems that were under the surface of Yugoslavia's apparent prosperity and that the powers that be didn't want this reported. Now, the chickens came home to roost. All these things that just a few years before, our economic section had been predicting, came home. The Yugoslav prosperity was built on a very weak basis. All of a sudden, without Tito, the political stability factor was removed and loans were not as easy to get. Loans were called. Yugoslavia was suddenly a problem country instead of a protected country, because as long as Tito was there, and as long as Tito was about to die, we gave it high priority. We pumped money into Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was important because Tito was dying. What would happen after Tito? Now that Tito was dead, it was a tremendous let down. The "Emperor had no clothes," and things were starting to unravel. But it was in the economic area. There was no indication of religious resentment. There was some dustup beginning between the Albanians in Kosovo and the Serbs. But that, again, was not part of what happened in Bosnia. Anyway the situation was stable enough, when the task force was disbanded and I had to find another job.

Q: So, we are talking about June 1980?

EVANS: This was June 1980.

Q: Where did you go?

EVANS: Well, I landed one of the best jobs I've had in the State Department, which was in the Political-Military Bureau (PM), that came about through some of the contacts that I made. I had not, as my previous record will show, had any political-military experience. I was still in the economic cone and had done primarily economic work. Nevertheless, the job that I always had my eye on, the Director of the Office of International Security Operations, was available, in June, July 1980, because its long-standing director, whose name escapes me, and who had carved out quite a niche for himself, departed. I was brought in to interview for that. Reginald Bartholomew was the head of PM, at that time and Deputy Director was David Gompert. In the summer of 1980 the focus of that office was the hostages in the Embassy in Tehran, the Soviet move into Afghanistan and a great perception and reality of threat detonating from Southwest Asia. I immediately got involved in what was called the Southwest Asia Strategy for Deployment of the Rapid Deployment Force. The responsibility of this office, which acronym was PM/ISO, International Security Operations, was to negotiate bases. It was a fascinating job, one of the responsibilities was to negotiate bases for the rapid deployment force.

Q: I think, for the record, could you explain what we mean by Southwest Asia, because our geographic terms sometimes needs explaining.

EVANS: At that time, it was the area from the Western Indian Ocean, through Iran, particularly the Persian Gulf, including Saudi Arabia. Diego Garcia, the British base located on a bunch of rocks in the Indian Ocean, was the dividing line. It did not include India. You could call it the Eastern Middle East. It was largely driven by the hostage crisis; the feeling that the Soviets, who had gone into Afghanistan, were capable of stirring up trouble in Iran and the Gulf, maybe Somalia and Djibouti in northeastern Africa. I guess it was shortly after I got there, I think it was October 1980, when the Iran/Iraq war started. I got very much involved in that too. The office was very small it was a very key office, like an NSC operation. It consisted of myself, a Deputy Director, and I think four other individuals, of whom three were military officers. So I had an Air Force colonel, one Navy commander, and one Navy captain and one defense oriented civilian working for me. A lot of our job was, and it was almost a 24-hour job, to try to nail down a basis for the facilitation of this forward basing strategy in the three key countries: Somalia, Oman, and Kenya. There were other specific negotiations, so I traveled, for example, to the Seychelles for the Air Force tracking base that we maintain there, to Egypt, to try to negotiate a base for a rapid deployment force there. This was at the time we were creating a new command, which was called Central Command. This was a part of our southwest Asia strategy. The idea was to base it somewhere in this area. We had, of course, ASU (Administrative Support Unit) Bahrain which was actually part of the Pacific Command. That came under the purview of this new Central Command. Eventually, the Central Command was based, of all places, in Tampa, FL because there just wasn't any other place to put it and none of the countries really wanted it. They wanted it just over the horizon. Those countries were agreeable to having agreements with the United States, but they didn't want the forces actually based in their countries. That was one whole set of problems. Our office acted as a liaison between the military and the State Department for any bases negotiated by the U.S. Government, particularly base negotiations with Spain, Greece, and others.

Q: Portugal?

EVANS: Yes, the Azores was very important. We also had a running dialogue and regular quarterly meetings with the British on cooperation, on Diego Garcia, the Persian Gulf, and so forth. When the Iraq/Iran war started, there was a whole flurry of activity there. The rules of engagement and my Navy Captain and Commander were working flat out on that. It was a very hectic, a very busy time.

Q: Let's concentrate on the Central Command, to begin with. When you took over in June 1980, what was the perceived threat?

EVANS: Well, the main threat was the Soviets. The Soviets could go down, swoop down, seeking the warm water and control of the Iranian and Gulf oil. The overarching threat was still seen as Soviet. The subsidiary the problems were Iran and Iraq. But fundamentalist Islam was not seen as the problem that it is now in the context with Iran. Although the Ayatollah had gone back, and had led the effort which resulted in the hostage taking, fundamentalist Islam was not perceived as the threat. It was Soviet and Soviet proxies that were driving this train and we were very concerned about it.

Q: As you were doing this, on the military side, were you getting input about Soviet capabilities? At the time, there were big maps, with red arrows going through Iraq, pointing toward Kuwait, and all. But when one thinks about it, that is a hell of a lot of territory to project an army through. What were you getting from our military side?

EVANS: Again, I don't think there were any firm indications of actual massing of troops. There was a lot of so-called "trouble making" activity in these countries. But perhaps we were overreacting to the combination of the Afghanistan situation and the Iranian hostage taking. You have to remember that at that time, the United States Government was in an election year. Carter and the Administration were very weakened by the hostage taking, and Carter was virtually a hostage in the White House. The whole country was almost hostage. It was a major overriding factor. I think the reaction to the hostage taking, and the perception of this Soviet-inspired threat wasn't just that the Soviets would move. It was overreaction and compensation. We kept very close track of Soviet naval movements in the whole area, of the Indian Ocean, the Gulf, Soviet ship visits, and resupply efforts to their clients throughout the whole area, as well as efforts in the Horn of Africa to establish a presence. We watched for Mediterranean forces and Black Sea movements, the situation in Turkey. I do not remember seeing anywhere any indication that any Soviet divisions had moved to the Iranian border. I don't think that ever happened. What I am saying, is that a lot of this was our perception of what might happen. Since Afghanistan, we were not going to let that happen again.

Q: No, but we have to be ready. As you went about this treaty and base negotiation, was it based on a worst case scenario: that you had to have something to counter the Soviets. Is that it?

EVANS: I think so. We didn't want to be caught short again as we were in Afghanistan. Although the analogy probably was not right, that was the thinking. So, we were going to have a base on Oman. We were going to have a base in Somalia and try to have a base somewhere in Egypt, which never turned out. Pre-positioning was very important, and we pre-positioned most supplies and equipment in Diego Garcia for eventual actions in that area should the Soviets move somewhere else. Iran was considered the first likely to be moved into, or somehow to be taken advantage of to control Iranian oil and get their warm water port. I might mention that it was at that time that the famous Desert One rescue operation failed.

Q: This is the operation to get the hostages out?

EVANS: Yes, to get the hostages out. It was a very hush-hush operation. I guess, Reginald Bartholomew, was in on it. I remember the news breaking very early one morning, something like 8:30 or shortly after I got into the office. We all rushed down to where the news was coming in, in the compartmental area of INR. We heard that it had gone awry and was going to be a major disaster. It was, however, an operation that was carried out with the preparations that my office had been directly involved in, in the sense of pre positioning, moving forces into the area, bringing in a lot of aircraft carriers and helicopters. This was new stuff at that time particularly in that area. If I am not mistaken, that was what caused Cyrus Vance to submit his resignation. It was the nail in Jimmy Carter's coffin, I think, as far as any further Presidential possibilities. It was a turning point that was very dispiriting to the military. There were a lot of accusations between the military and the political types. As you may recall, the problem was that Carter was micro managing this himself and was calling the shots. At one point, he made a decision, himself, for political reasons, about abandoning the Pinkard, or whatever it was. Anyway, that did not go down very well with the military. It was a major development and not a very good one for the United States and certainly not for the Carter Administration. As the fall wore on and the political campaign heated up Reagan started pouring on the criticism of the failure of the Carter Administration to do anything about the hostages. This became one of the central themes of the election campaign. One little incident that was amusing in the run-up to the elections: I was called into the Director's office and told, behind closed doors, that I was being given a very secret mission. I would head an inter-agency team composed of a Defense Department base negotiating lawyer, a CIA type, and a State Department lawyer. The four of us were to go out to Egypt and to negotiate for a base at Ras Banas, on the Red Sea. All of this would be tough but he assured that I would be able to pull it off. My counterpart would be Osama El-Baz, who was a fellow Harvard graduate, who was now serving as Mubarak's political adviser. We went over to Cairo and were ensconced in a hotel. We had our first meeting with the Egyptians. I realized right away that this negotiation was not going to go anywhere, certainly not anywhere quickly. Each meeting ended in nothing in particular. We were sent back to the hotel, and given two or three days before we would have another meeting. Finally, after two or three weeks, the Egyptians made it clear that they were not interested in negotiating granting us a base in Ras Banas at all. So, we came back.

Q: We know our motivation. What was the Egyptian motivation from what we were gathering?

EVANS: Well, they clearly didn't want to be perceived as being in bed with the Americans to that extent that they would actually have an American base on their soil. Perhaps, it was idealistic, not realistic, to think that they would. To have an American base would have obviously had put Egypt in the same category as Spain or Portugal. Politically, it was a very hard sell, and as it turned out, an impossible sell.

Q: Was it wishful thinking on the part of your being told when you went out, that this was going to be a difficult negotiation but we're sure we are going to get it? It sounds like a Washington-type operation which hasn't been vetted through the Embassy, or something?

EVANS: It was a Washington operation. You are very perceptive because when I got back, I felt as though I had failed. I was very chagrined and almost embarrassed to go in and report to Reg Bartholomew. Of course, he knew from the cable copy that we had failed. I went in, sort of hanging my head, and said, "You know, Reg, we tried over two or three weeks, but couldn't pull it off." He said, "You did great. You did just what we thought you would do. Absolutely, you fulfilled the mission, congratulations," and all this, he said. Well, it turned out, I was sent out on a fool's errand, as it were, because they knew perfectly well that the Egyptians were not going to grant the base. The Egyptians already said that. But we had an authorization request before the Congress to grant certain funds which was contingent upon our making a good-faith effort to get that base. My colleagues and I, not having been told this, were sent out almost like a psychological experiment to try to pull this thing off when the people sending us out knew perfectly well it wasn't going to be, and it wasn't meant to be pulled off. The whole thing was meant to have been a failure so that the Congress would be told: "You see, it is impossible. The Egyptians won't let us in there. So, we need the money to go elsewhere." I guess it was funding for the Central Command or something. It was to satisfy the congressional funding types and let them know that we can't go into Egypt. Therefore we have to go somewhere else and we are going to need more money because it is going to cost more to go into Tampa, or wherever it was. You are absolutely right. I felt a great sense of relief. I also felt betrayed, or abused would be the right word. But, it happens.

Q: Well, let's talk about some of the other places. Any problems? What was the situation when you arrived, and how did it develop on Diego Garcia? This is British controlled, with some Indian influence there?

EVANS: I guess it is a long-term lease that the British have over this tiny island, mostly rocks. It is very strategically located though, for pre-positioning of supplies and equipment. That was the main thrust of our negotiations. It was the pre-positioning there, if I am not mistaken. It came into play in the Desert One operation, I believe. The problem was that we wanted to pre-position more than the British were willing to have there. Their argument was that if you overloaded the circuit, the Indians were going to get upset and the developing world would look at us and say: "This was meant to be a low-key, British resupply base for shipping." This was the whole thing. It was not designed initially to be a military base. Diego Garcia was originally designed to enable British shipping to have a resupply point for refueling and for repairs. They felt we were overloading the circuit by bringing in all this stuff. The British were reluctant and very cautious about our whole Southwest Asia strategy because they had their own concerns about a high U.S. and U.S.-British military posture in this area. Countries like Oman and much of the world had been British before and they still had interests there which they don't have now. At that time, however, they were very much involved with countries such as Oman, Aden and Somalia. They didn't really want us to get too high-profile there. That was the underlying tension with our negotiations with the British on Diego Garcia.

Q: In 1980, were these the first negotiations we had on Diego Garcia?

EVANS: Oh, no. The negotiations had started before I came into the office, but I don't remember exactly when. We had worked with the British before on having stuff there, but nothing at all to the extent that we were asking now. We had no major Southwest strategy to implement. The option of this Southwest Asian strategy was one of the brain children of Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor, under Carter. We were scrambling around like crazy. There was tremendous pressure to find places in the area where we could stash stuff. We turned to the British and upped the ante on them quite a bit. I don't think it was a complete shift, but it was quantitatively. Up until then, we had a very low level presence, maybe usage there. But not all the storage, resupply and positioning of the equipment that we wanted. The British reluctantly went along, feeling that it was in the overall Western interest and the U.S. bilateral interest and, of course, very much in the Reagan Administration interest. The special relationship was there. It is not there so much now.

Q: Were you gathering from the British whether they had the same strategic concerns we had?

EVANS: No, I think there's was less of a concern on paper. They would agree with us, but their role in all of these meetings was to try to dampen down our perception of both Soviet threat and Communist penetration.

Q: What did you do in Somalia during the time you were doing this?

EVANS: That was under negotiation at the time I came in, so I did not go. My office was responsible for it. But the work had already been started when I came in June. George Churchill was the former Director of the office, by the way. He was sort of a legendary figure, had been there for years.

Q: He had been in Greece too, hadn't he?

EVANS: He may have been. He retired from the State Department, from the Foreign Service, in that position and I took over. I did not go to Somalia. That was done. Somalia and Oman were also done before. I got involved in the tail end of the Kenyan negotiations. When I came in, our role in these base agreements was the implementation and the follow-up. In the case of the Omanis they got cold feet after having made the agreement. They had to be reassured. There was constant handholding and pumping up of the Omanis, telling them that it wasn't going to hurt them. The Omanis felt very exposed because of their geographic location. They were concerned that we were going to come in with all this stuff and they kept saying: "You have to keep a low profile." The two actual negotiations that I carried out myself were the attempts with Egypt, the renewal of our base in the Seychelles and then a follow-up negotiation with the Kenyans. The initial negotiation had been done in late 1979 or early 1980, before I came into the office.

Q: How did your office look in October 1980, at the start of the Iran/Iraq war? What was the initial reaction, and as it developed?

EVANS: Well, anything against Iran was looked at favorably. Right from the beginning, I think it is fair to say, we were pro-Iraqi, although not overtly so. Our goal was to try to see the Iraqis weaken the Iranians as much as possible. That was one goal, the other was to keep the area clear so that our shipping could continue unharmed and that it wouldn't spill over against our interests. On one hand, it was containment of the conflict, control and management, but we very much wanted to see the Iraqis weaken the Iranians although it obviously was in our interest to see both sides weakened. It is like seeing two basically hostile states, one much more hostile than the other, going at it. We were trying to make the area as safe as possible for our interests and to prevent the thing from spilling over and getting out of hand.

Q: So, you were doing this from June 1980, until when?

EVANS: Until about April 1981. It was a very concentrated period, just about a year.

Q: Absolutely. What was your impression of how the Saudis dealt with us during this time?

EVANS: I don't remember any direct involvement that we had with the Saudis except their general concern that they made it very clear, they didn't want any high-level bases. They were not going to be any part of this. Naturally, we canvassed the whole area. The only ones who said they would agree to negotiate bases were the three countries, Somalia, Kenya, Oman, and then, Diego Garcia. That was the crux of it there. Then, there was this Egyptian effort which came a cropper. The Saudis said, "Don't rely on us. We're out of it." So, the Saudis never came into it at all.

Q: How about Kuwait?

EVANS: Nor the Kuwaitis. Bahrain's feeling was that they were taking care of the Mid-East horse, and that was enough for them. They were close to the action anyway and didn't want any more American presence there. Here we were, in this, sort of conundrum: people were griping about the fact that we were trying to save these people from being overrun by the Soviets and/or the Iranians and they wouldn't let us even come in and help them, the ingrates that they are.

Q: A decade later, it was the same thing, until Iraq invaded Kuwait. Up to that point, we were being told to keep hands-off, very decidedly by both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, until all of a sudden, their ox was gored. Turning to some of the other places, were there any particular problems, incidents, or situations that you had to deal with on our worldwide base agreements? Greece, was that a problem?

EVANS: Greece was not critical. Spain was a big problem because the Spanish had cold feet and were trying to, and did, of course, reduce their involvement. In fact, we had to move our bases to Italy. The Italians were our rock in the Mediterranean while the Spanish wanted to reduce and eliminate our presence. As you know, we had to move the Air Force base out of Teheran.

Q: We moved it to Sicily, didn't we?

EVANS: Aviano, I think, in Southern Italy.

Q: Sigonella, or something?

EVANS: Sigonella is in Sicily.

Q: Anyway, we moved into Southern Italy.

EVANS: Right. There were little problems. The Portuguese hung in there pretty firmly with us. We considered Portugal as our rock solid pillar in the Western Mediterranean, Italy our pillar in the Central Mediterranean. Unwritten, of course, was the role of Israel in the eastern part of the Mediterranean and of southern Turkey and then Greece. Greece was always a problem. You couldn't really rely on the Greeks that much because of the Greek/Turkish issue There was nothing at that time involving Morocco, as I recall. The focus was so much on Southwest Asia, that I don't remember any other global negotiations except the renewal of something in the Pacific that I was hoping to get to go on, but did not, for one reason or the other. I was really tied down, working flat out on this combination of implementing the Southwest Asia strategy and then the Iraq/Iran war. We had a task force with the French, the British and the Americans in the Gulf on combined rules of engagement. That was all done out of my office with the Navy Captain running that operation. The Navy Commander was running the Southwest Asia part. We did an amazing amount of work with this small bunch of people. The Air Force Colonel was, I knew, sort of reporting to other people. That was understood, and I didn't worry about it. It turned out, that he was directly involved in the Iranian hostage situation. In fact, when the hostages came out, in January 1981, that was done through my office in the State Department. My office was the coordinating office for that. The Air Force Colonel was doing it but it was so secret that it was actually kept from me.

What I am saying is that when I went in, in June, I had a quick orientation and then I was sent to Europe for orientation to all the military commands, bases and everything there. That was the EUCOM (European Command) and the whole EUCOM structure. I came back, and from July on, it was just flat out with these three main issues plus a whole raft of other issues. Now in all fairness, I would like to say something else, which was an element of something that was starting in the service at that point. On the personnel side, when I was interviewed by Reginald Bartholomew for the job, I expressed concern about the importance of it, and that I had hoped I would be able to do a good job, and handle these, essentially new responsibilities, and get up to speed in areas that I hadn't dealt with that much. He leaned over, very intently, and said: "Well, there is one really major problem that I want you to focus on." I was thinking "Um, it must be secret Soviet maneuvers, or it must be an upcoming base negotiation," or something like that. He said, "It's your deputy," who was a woman, "This is the biggest problem we have in this whole bureau: your deputy." She was a very militant woman and she was a member of NOW, National Organization of Women, which, at the time, was very aggressive. She was the State Department representative for NOW, and she spent a lot of her time working in the office on women's issues, and complaining about the fact that she was being discriminated against and not given the proper authority. One of my biggest headaches was that woman. That person didn't have to be a woman, but in this case, it was. She was involved in a class-action suit. There were lawyers coming in, and there were closed doors. It was a tremendously difficult situation and caused tremendous morale problems. The military just threw up their hands. When I was away, they dreaded it, they told me, because she was in charge. The Air Force Colonel was absolutely appalled at her, because, unfortunately, she was not a very capable person. She was going through a divorce and was subject to fits of weeping, which were alternated with these bouts of hostility. Here she was working in this military position, with three military officers in fairly close quarters and she felt the military were sexist pigs, basically. It was a terrible job. It was a real eye-opener to me. It was part of the beginning of the State Department preoccupation with the role of women. At that time, it was not a very pleasant or productive situation. It kept getting steadily worse, until efficiency report time came. When they were done, I guess in the spring, so this must have been in early 1981, naturally I did not recommend her for promotion. She came in and threatened legal action against me. She was going to take the whole bureau to task. I told her that she was not capable and did not merit being promoted, whereupon she dissolved into tears and threats. This circus went on and on. Anyway, I have to say that for the record, because the purpose of this exercise is to educate people about the various aspects of conducting foreign affairs.

Q: I understand.

EVANS: It's all very well to talk about the glamorous, exciting policy things. But underneath and behind that are all these personnel decisions and situations that determine very much how our life was. In some cases, they made it easy and in some cases, they made it difficult. In any case, it represented, in this case, the growing trend manifested in this situation with this woman.

Q: How did that play out as far as you know?

EVANS: She did not get promoted, naturally. She became very bitter. Of course, she had not gotten promoted by previous reports that had been done by my predecessor. She knew from the report that I did, that she wasn't going to get promoted either. By this time, she was a little long in the tooth. She was then an FSO-3, I think. Which of course, drove her up the wall. Your question leads into probably what I should be also talking about now, and that is, when Ronald Reagan came in, there were wholesale changes in the State Department.

Q: We are talking about January 1981?

EVANS: That's right. I was alerted by somebody in the hall that my office was designated to be hit. Three office directors, who were career Foreign Service Officers, myself included, were going to be moved out to make way for political appointees. There was a whole flurry. Who needed this now? This violated the American Foreign Service Association's Agreement with the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs. In this agreement, it was guaranteed that a certain number of office directors should be career. Well, this agreement was ridden over roughshod and a person named Rick Burke came in and took over PM. He brought in Bob Blackwell and Richard Haas, who went on to various positions. It turned out that these people had been studying the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs during the election and making contingency plans to reorganize the whole Bureau of Political Military-Affairs, including the abolition of my office. They renamed it RSA, Regional Security Affairs, instead of International Security Operations. The office was terminated, as it were. I think everybody was moved out. The Air Force Colonel was asked to stay on but he was so disgusted by this time that I think he packed it in. The Navy Captain went onto some other position and eventually went to the Congress. He became a Congressional liaison in Congress. The Navy Commander had had it by this time. He retired, went into academic work and later became a consultant. The civilian military type went back to the Defense Department. I left too and at this point, I must have been an FSO-2.

Q: An FSO-2 in the old system.

EVANS: I was promoted the year I left Belgrade, so I was an FSO-2. We discussed asking lawyers about trying to challenge what was being done, but somehow, there was no support for it. It was clear that we were not welcome. They wanted to move their people in. It was senseless to fight it. At least that was the feeling. We had better things to do. The woman in question left too, of course. There was no doubt about that. She then was sent out to Vienna to be an attachï¿½ to the International Atomic Energy Agency. That wasn't too bad. She never did get promoted, of course. That was her last year, and she retired after that.

Q: We are talking about April 1981?

EVANS: That's right, April 1981. The new team had moved in. We had all been given our pink slips, which was too bad. I was just getting into the substance of this job. There was a tremendous upheaval in the State Department.

Q: So, where did you go?

EVANS: Once again, as a senior officer, I suddenly realized that there was a surplus of senior officers. I spent the next eight, nine months, serving on various boards. I was picked up by the Bureau of Public Affairs and sent out to speak on U.S. Foreign Policy, particularly drawing on my work on the base strategy and the hostage release. I went down to New Orleans and spoke there. I went up to Boston. I went all over the country speaking to university groups. Then, I became an Inspector of Foreign Service Officers on detail. That took me to Alaska, because we had a Foreign Service Officer on detail to the Governor of Alaska. I went out to California, Texas.

Q: Around that time, it was one of those made-up jobs. I was walking the halls too. I went to California. I went to Hawaii. Well, after this sort of hiatus, what happened?

EVANS: The situation had sort of stabilized in January of 1982. I was still not what I would call "gainfully employed" or fully employed, as opposed to gainfully employed. Larry Eagleburger had left Belgrade and had come in as the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. He brought in, as one of his deputies, David Gompert, who had been the Deputy in PM and with whom I had worked very closely. David Gompert saw me in the hall one day. It was a very momentous occasion and said, "Hi, what are you doing?" I said, "Well, I am still looking for a good job." He said, "I've got the perfect job for you. We are going to reopen a job that had been abolished, but we are going to bring it back. It is the Political Advisor to CINCUS (Commander-In-Chief U.S. Naval Forces), now in London." He also said, "You would be perfect, of course, because of your PM experience and everything. I'll mention it to Larry." I put on a full bore campaign to get this job. You can imagine when the word got out the competition was superior. There were a lot of people who wanted it, some of whom had much longer credentials. I had only had hardly a year of Political-Military experience. I was still in the economic cone. To make a long story short, I was still pretty close to Eagleburger at that point. He was hospitalized at Georgetown with the beginning of major problems with his leg. An Admiral, whose name was Ronald Hays, a three-star at that time, and head of the Navy operation in London, was coming back in early February, or early January 1982, to interview the six finalists, of which I was one. I had gotten through. I think there were 25 people who were interested in this job. Good Lord, being based in London with the whole of Europe and Middle East, you would think it was a dream job. I knew I would have to really pull out some stops to get this job. I figured Larry Eagleburger's recommendation would carry weight within the European area. The Admiral would be attentive to whom Larry Eagleburger recommended. I figured I had only one, maybe two, strong competitors of the other six. I knew there were some who had good paper credentials, but I knew they weren't going to get it. I went to see Larry Eagleburger in the hospital. He was practically on his death bed. He was propped up, reading about the Arabs. I said, "What are you doing." He said, "I've got to learn about the Arabs, I know nothing about the Middle East." It was very amusing. He said, "What can I do for you?" I said, "I want you to call the Admiral. Here is the name and number, and tell him I'm your top candidate, and I'm the one to be hired for this job." He agreed to do it. That was like the day before the interview.

The day of the interview, it was snowing like crazy as I was starting to drive out to the Pentagon. The night before the plane had crashed into the Potomac.

Q: The 14th Street Bridge, I think.

EVANS: Right. I remember driving past, because you could still see the salvage operations going on. I got to the Pentagon in very bad weather, a lot of snow. I got in for the interview. We were being interviewed in series. The Admiral only had a certain chunk of time. This was very important to me for various reasons, both professional, I had been without a real job for a while, although Larry Eagleburger said, "David, you really want that job." I was so surprised. I realized what he meant was a political pull-out job is not exactly on the fast track. To me, it seemed tremendously interesting. I had always wanted to serve in London. I had been bitten by the political-military bug, and I was still very au courant with the operations. I had worked on bases in Spain, Portugal, Greece, the whole Mediterranean. I was pretty well qualified, actually, before that. I also wanted to go abroad at that point for personal reasons. I was very interested in the job. I got into the room with the Admiral. It was a very bare, stark, Pentagon room. He was very welcoming. It turned out that his son was a Foreign Service officer, Dennis Hays. You may recall him. He was President of AFSA at one point and was appointed ambassador recently to some African country. He had a favorable feeling about FSOs, which was good. Many military did not. He said, "Have a seat. I see you have an interesting background, career." Pushing the ashtray over, he said, "Oh, by the way, here is an ashtray if you care to smoke." I said, "No, I don't smoke, I never have smoked." I didn't think much about it. That was the critical test. He could not stand anybody who smoked. I think there were one or two of the candidates who did smoke. They were knocked out immediately. I learned this later. I saw it in action. He was absolutely livid if anyone smoked in his presence. At least I passed that test. We went through the interview, and I still didn't get a sense of whether I would be hired or not. I knew this was it. He was going to make the decision, based on these interviews. As we finished, and I got ready to go, he said, "Well, Larry Eagleburger called me. He thinks very highly of you." Then, I felt there was hope. In due course, I think it was in three days, that I got the word that I had been selected. I was to get out there in a week. It is typical in the Foreign Service, you go through these ups and downs.

Q: We will pick this one up now. The next time, you had been selected to be Political Advisor, POLAD, to the Admiral. What is the title?

EVANS: The acronym is CINC/NAV/EUR, Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, based in London.

Q: It started in January of 1982?

EVANS: February of 1982.

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Q: Today is the 10th of October 1997. David, you had gone to POLAD in London. You started in 1982?

EVANS: 1982, yes.

Q: You were there from when to when?

EVANS: I was there for four and one-half years. I got there in early February 1982, after my selection, by the then Admiral in Charge, in Washington. I left in July of 1986. It was a four and a half year assignment.

Q: Could you explain first, what was the job of CINC/EUR? Was that it?

EVANS: No, it was CINC/US/NAV/EUR, which is the acronym for U.S. Naval Forces for Europe, which was one of the three component military commands under the European command, which is CINC/EUR, based in Stuttgart. USAREUR is the Army headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany. USAFE is the Air Force headquarters based in Ramstein. The naval headquarters, somewhat oddly, but due to historic reasons, is based in London on Grosvenor Square in a historic building, catty-corner from the American Embassy.

Q: During this 1982 to 1986-period, the early-Reagan and mid-Reagan period. You had John Lehman as Secretary of the Navy. It was probably the most aggressive period we had with the Navy, wasn't it? Could you talk about what our posture was in those days, Navy wise, and the politics thereof that you dealt with?

EVANS: You're right. The Navy was without question, the most prominent of the four services, depending on how you consider the Marines. This was partly due to the Reagan force projection and partly due to John Lehman's particular emphasis on Naval expansion to contain the perceived Soviet threat. The Navy was, without question, the most interesting and active in long-range force projection of the three services. It was also the one in which there were the most political military questions that came to the attention of the Political Advisor or POLAD. I think we all know that many of these POLAD jobs are sleepy, quasi-academic jobs.

The job in London was extremely active, very hands-on, and very policy oriented. When I'm talking about policy, I'm talking about major policy initiatives throughout the whole area that the Naval Command in Europe encompassed, which was from the Northern area of Norway, right down through all of Europe, to the Mediterranean. It enhanced all of the Mediterranean, including the Sixth Fleet - which was under my Admiral's command - and the northern rim of Africa, namely Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, for what that was worth, Egypt, Israel, the Middle-East, right up to the Persian Gulf, which was under the relatively new Central Command, headquartered in Tampa. We dealt with all the European issues, all of the East-West issues because the European Command encompassed the Soviet Union fully. Anything to do with the Soviet Union and the Soviet threat and Soviet force projections, other than the Soviet fleet in the Pacific area, but anything dealing with the Soviet Union in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Soviet Union, on the ground, I would say, to the extent that the Navy had interest in that, came under our purview. It also included base-related problems, local problems and particularly the Arab-Israeli problems. Those were all within our purview. What was not within our purview was the Iran/Iraq situation, although our intelligence outfit located in London, which was probably one of the best military intelligence outfits in the world, actively followed all U.S. Naval force activities on a daily basis. Because of what I had been dealing with in my previous position as Director of International Security Operations and the State Department's Political-Military Affairs Bureau, many of these problems came to my attention as well, even though they were slightly outside our geographic confines. Technically, our purview went all the way down to South Africa, although during my tenure, we didn't go down there. I did travel extensively throughout Northern Africa. The major problem though, and the one that I dealt with immediately upon arrival and immediately before departure, was in the Middle-East. It was the Lebanon situation. As you may recall, the Israeli forces, in early 1982, had moved into Southern Lebanon and Palestinians had fled back either to Tunisia or to other places, and a war, initially a slow war, of political and military attrition began between Israel and Lebanon/the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization). That heated up considerably. But during the four and one-half years I was there, the underlying motif and the major activity, constant activity, was the Lebanon engagement, both in and out of Lebanon.

Q: In the first place, I want to come back to this issue and several others. Just to begin with, how were you used? You had what, several admirals while you were there?

EVANS: I used to joke that during the four and one-half years I was there, I served seven admirals. That was partly because of some double-heading that went on. There was a large turnover of admirals, including a well-known Admiral, Bill Crowe, who went on to become Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Let me go back and say, when I went out there, this position had been empty, nonexistent.

Q: The POLAD position?

EVANS: The POLAD position had been abolished two years before by the State Department in an effort to save money. It was felt by the State Department that they could adequately furnish political advice to the Navy across the street through their Political Section at the Embassy. The U.S. Navy was not happy with that because they wanted a full-time State Department representative who was responsible to the admiral, not to the ambassador. The decision was reached in late 1981 that in response to the Navy's demarche, and probably connected to this Naval build up that we were talking about, to restore this position. I was the first POLAD to go out and reopen the position in 1982, after approximately, a two-year hiatus, in which there was no POLAD. That was both good and bad. It was good in the sense that I got a lot of attention from the admiral and the senior officers. It was bad in the sense that there was no infrastructure to build on. I had to open an office, create an office, hire a secretary, build up files. There was absolutely nothing to walk into. That took some time. Although I was very welcomed, I had to introduce myself and introduce my function. It wasn't as though I came in to replace somebody who was already active, and intertwined in the operations. That was the background under which I came in. At the time, the Naval Command for Europe was headed by a three-star admiral. It was separate from the NATO, Southern Command, which was headquartered in Naples, which is still, and was then, headed by a four-star U.S. Naval admiral.

Less than a year into my work, toward the end of 1982, the Navy decided they would double-hat the CINC/US/NAV/EUR, the U.S. National Naval Command with CINCSOUTH, the NATO Southern Command admiral. At the time that NATO four-star Commander was William J. Crowe, who came up to London quite a bit to visit because he had gotten his doctorate in London. He loved London, being of a scholarly turn. He visited frequently. Admiral Hays was the one who selected me, very carefully, I might say, in the interview process in January 1982. Having a son, who at that time, had recently joined the Foreign Service, he was more favorably disposed to the Foreign Service than perhaps a number of other senior military officers are. In any event, I was very fond of Ron Hays, who went on to become the Vice Chief of Naval Operations when the double-heading took place. The double-heading took place, as I recall, in late 1983 or early 1984. Admiral Hays, at that point, went back to Washington with a promotion to four-stars to be the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, VCNO. A new three-star came out to London who was no longer the CINC/US/NAV/EUR. He was the DCINC/NAV/EUR, the Deputy Commander in Chief for U.S. Naval Forces in Europe. Then, what to do with the POLAD, which was namely I? I was assigned to CINC/US/NAV/EUR, but CINC/US/NAV/EUR suddenly became Admiral Crowe down in Naples. Of course, he had his own other POLAD, who was the NATO POLAD. I, in a way, served two admirals. It was my senior admiral, who was the four-star CINC/US/NAV/EUR-CINCSOUTH in Naples and the DCINC/US/NAV/EUR, the three-star admiral in London. That is why I say, in the four and one-half years I was there, I actually served seven different admirals.

Q: What would you do, in general? Then, we will move to specifics. What was the function of the POLAD, as the admiral and you sort of mutually recreated the job?

EVANS: The POLAD position was largely what the admiral wanted to make of it as regards to requirements. Then, it was largely what I wanted to make of it as regards to the rest of the time or other matters. Typically, when I got there in February, the place was jumping because the Lebanon situation was already getting nasty. There were any number of political questions that Admiral Hays would ask me to look into, on a daily basis, and several times in many days. The questions were regarding our policy and what the State Department would think of this or that, and if we did this, what would the implications be. What was the political inclination of certain parties in Lebanon, and that sort of thing? There were a lot of trips. I spent, probably in that first year, particularly the first two years, I probably traveled two weeks out of the month with an admiral, sometimes by myself because I had rank and was able to commandeer an airplane for myself. I occasionally went on missions with officers to Turkey, for example, where we were trying to establish an alternate base to Larnaca and Cyprus for military operations off of Lebanon. It was a very strategic position.

Typically, the day began at 9:00 with an intelligence briefing in the briefing room. The three-star admiral would sit in the first row, in the middle. His deputy was a two-star, and he would sit to his right. I would sit to his left. It established for all to see the ranking order of things. I, at the time, was an OC, I guess. As such, I was accorded, one-star rank which made a difference. There is a long debate about whether POLAD's should be senior officers or not.

Q: They really respond to rank.

EVANS: They do. They are told authoritatively by the bureaucracy that this person is a flag-rank official. There is a whole lot of difference. The day would start with a briefing by N2 (Intelligence), then N3 (Operations), occasionally N4 (Supply Logistics), occasionally N5 (Policy & Plans). Those were the major divisions that I would work with or how I was involved with things that I came in contact with. I did not, of course, get involved in personnel or administrative matters. It was strictly Naval. During the briefing the admiral would occasionally ask me questions on the spot which I would know or I would not know. If I didn't, I would promise immediately to find out. I would do that either by a memorandum or phone calls back to Washington, as soon as Washington opened, or I would work with one of the Ns in getting the information or the analysis, proposal, or the recommendation to him. I built on my recent connections with the Political-Military Affairs Bureau and particularly people like Arnie Raphel, who, when I went out, was working with the Under Secretary and with Larry Eagleburger with whom I served in Belgrade. Eagleburger had gone back as Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. I spent a lot of time calling back to Washington, getting opinions, acting as the liaison, as it were, for the admiral. The admiral used me in a very personal way. Nobody else, for example, had any authority to ask me to do anything. It had to come from the admiral. They certainly came looking for help, particularly when I worked closely with an N2 (Intelligence) and N5 (Plans). They would often come up to my room, and I was given a rather nice room, like Admiral Hays. We would sit down and go over maps and plans, and biographies, very often, and cross-fertilize ourselves, our knowledge base in both Intelligence and Plans & Policy.

Q: Let's take the Lebanese crisis first. From your perspective, could you say how that developed, when you arrived? Also, how did the Navy get involved?

EVANS: The Navy got involved because, for one reason, to protect the American citizens that were in Lebanon, to protect those forces in Lebanon that were judged to be on our side, to provide military support and security for Ambassador Phil Habib, who was shuttling back and forth as the Middle East negotiator. I'm trying to work this thing out between the Israelis, the PLO, and the Lebanese. The situation gradually got much more dangerous on the ground which lead to an increase buildup of our offshore naval forces. Then, it involved other countries including Cyprus, where we used the port of Larnaca as our forward operation base. Also, the desire to use Turkish facilities led me to be in the missions flying out to Turkey to try to negotiate that which did not work out. It involved closer cooperation with the Israelis in naval activities that I had not realized before. We did not particularly acknowledge the fact that we had a very active and substantive cooperation program with the Israeli military and navy in anti-submarine warfare, in particular. Our forces were increased offshore and the Marines, as you recall, were placed in Lebanon. We worked with the Israelis in trying to make sure that the Libyans and others hostile to our interests did not come up and attack us under water.

Q: Were you there when the Sabra and Shatila massacres took place?

EVANS: Yes.

Q: And the bombardment of Beirut, prior to that?

EVANS: That's right.

Q: Could you give me a bit of feeling about the attitude of our military, particularly toward the Israeli armed forces and the Israeli policy during that particular time? What were you getting?

EVANS: Well, as far as I could see, our military had nothing but great respect for the Israeli military. Our military realized what the State Department did not realize: that there was a major threat looming from the other side, the Arab side. We had good intelligence sharing with the Israelis. I was very impressed with the amount of intelligence and good intelligence that their navy had about Iranian, Syrian, hostile Lebanese and PLO activities, that were very threatening to our forces and to our interests in the area. You had a dichotomy growing that lead to the split, just before the bombing of the Marine headquarters, which I guess was in March or April of 1984. The Defense Department had a better assessment than the State Department. The State Department was terribly naive about our presence. They were talking about having our military build basketball courts. They were trying to have it both ways. They were trying to go into a hostile environment from the anti-Israeli forces' point of view, and yet, act as though we were there merely as benevolent peacekeepers. Therefore, we should be opening dental clinics and building them basketball courts, and playing basketball. At the time that George Shultz was telling Casper Weinberger that we should be building basketball courts and opening dental clinics, Weinberger was being told by his people that the Syrians were building facilities in the Bekaa Valley with Iranian money, and planning to send trucks loaded with bombs to bomb our forces. This was days, if not weeks, before the horrendous bombing that took place. I happened to be back in Washington at that time for briefings in the Political-Military Affairs Bureau, so, I know whereof I speak on that issue. I at least feel I do.

Q: In the first place, it was a complicated business. First, we put our troops in to help get the Palestinians out after the Israelis colluded with some right wing Christian militia, and went in and slaughtered Palestinian families. We had already used our troops to help pull out the Palestinian armed forces. Almost by reflex, we let our Marines back in, along with the French and Italians, I think. At that time, was there questioning at your admiral's headquarters about . . . "fine, but what is this about?" Later, this became a major issue . . . "What are we up to?"

EVANS: Yes, I think it is fair to say as we have seen in the past, and we are seeing in the present day, that policy makers decided to use U.S. military forces to carry out activities that are not those directly related to what the military thinks it should be doing: some sort of peacekeeping or separation of forces, or presence, or whatever you want to call it. You are right, with that mission, there was no tangible enemy to kill or beat. There was a great deal of frustration about being in an increasingly hostile environment where we could only take limited measures to protect our own forces. The purpose seemed to be just to hang on, while this nebulous process dragged on. This began with your question about what the military thought of Israel. I think the military perception was, and it certainly was my perception, based on all the evidence that I saw, that the PLO started the darn thing. The amount of hostile terrorist activity that came directly from Iran and Syria, as far as I know, is still going on. The creation and support of the training camps in Bekaa Valley were clearly supported financially by this Syrian/Iranian connection. This happened in the last few days of this stupid assassination attempt the Israelis did in Jordan. They occasionally bungle things and occasionally on a big scale. I think the perception that we were working under militarily was that this was a situation that had been brought on, as it normally is, by the Arabs' failure to adhere to proper behavior. Then, when you try to do something about it as police forces do sometimes in an urban riot, excessive force gets used and then all hell breaks lose. People forget the reason for the use of excessive force in the first place. That is the point I am trying to make. The PLO started it and certain things happened. But the given was that we were on the Israeli side. Whether they acted correctly or not the whole time was almost beside the point from the military point of view because they were our allies. They were and still are our NATO anchors. They are not in NATO, but they might just as well be.

Q: Well, there were some confrontations with these Israelis. One always thinks of the Israelis' tank that one of our Marine officers jumped up on with a pistol to make him stop moving in. Were you getting any reflections or concerns about a fairly heated-up Israeli force that was pushing in, and we were supposed to stop it, particularly at the lieutenant level and all? Was this a concern?

EVANS: Yes, in the sense that there was a concern that the situation was getting very ugly and messy. Neat lines of division as to who was the good guy and who was the bad guy, which is how the military likes to deal with it were disappearing. Of course, that doesn't always apply. It sure is not right in war. It was getting messy. There were a lot of doubts, as the summer of 1983 went on. I think it is fair to say that the U.S. military was increasingly unhappy with the civilian direction that it was getting because the mission became obscured. The mission seemed to be survival. Then, we had the major bombing which was a tremendous jolt to the headquarters and to everybody, including Admiral Crowe, particularly and all of us. There was this inevitable process of escalation. The Navy was not particularly happy with that, bringing in and dusting off the battleships, with the New Jersey bombarding the shore, which came later. I guess that was in 1984. We ruefully had to conclude that most of the shelling had missed its targets and probably more civilians were killed than anybody else. It was done for political purposes.

Q: When this was going on, you say you talked with officials. Was most of this driven by Washington's activists saying, "Don't just stand there, do something?"

EVANS: The whole thing was coming from Washington. The Naval command took orders. They didn't initiate anything. They grew increasingly unhappy with the orders they got and the failure to sense where this policy was leading, what the policy was, and if you could identify the policy, where it was taking you. When the Navy high command gets an order from Washington from the Joint Chiefs to carry out an operation, it is not as though I was asked what I thought about it. In some cases, I was, before it happened. That was a rarity. By that time, there was no need to know what I thought. The main thing I got involved in was informing other governments that all hell was going to break loose. The admiral wanted to make sure that the other parties were alerted beforehand. It very often involved calling embassies, like our embassies in Rome and Athens, to coordinate with them or inform them. They were informed in other ways too, but I had that particular job. Something like the New Jersey, of course, we were told to do. The chain of command, which was a very important and significant military activity, in that this was the first time a battleship had been used since World War II. The orders went to CINC/EUR in Germany, then to US/NAV/EUR, who at that time, was in Naples, then to the D/CINC/NAV/EUR, who was in London, then to Commander of the Sixth Fleet in Naples. That was the way the orders went.

Q: Was there any particular inquiry about responsibility for the bombing of the barracks and all? One of the issues was this very complicated command structure where people in London were essentially micro managing events on the ground in Lebanon. Was that a concern as this whole thing developed?

EVANS: Of course, from the point of view of the Command in London, they thought that was absolutely appropriate because that is where the Naval command was, and the Sixth Fleet works for London. That is the way it is. As you probably know, there have been proposals for years to abolish the London Command. It was saved at one critical point by Eisenhower. There are many arguments about whether the Command should just be abolished and put down in Naples. You would have one Naval Command co-located with the NATO Southern Command. So, that's where the Sixth Fleet is. Why have they got to give way to London? We had some acrimonious disputes with the Sixth Fleet. There was a lot of unhappiness between the Sixth Fleet operational people and NAV/EUR, the London Navy Command people. It was a cumbersome structure. If it wasn't for the entrenched interests one would want to scrap London and put it down in Naples. One of the reasons why we can't is the security angle. I think we have always felt that we wanted to have our Naval Command located in Britain rather than Italy.

Q: Well, there's the problem. I was Consul General in Naples, 1979 - 1981. If nothing else, you had the Camorra, which is the local Mafia that was a major problem there, among other things, as well as volcanoes, and earthquakes. While this Lebanon thing was going on, you were the liaison, for one thing, between our political-military in the State Department and the Near Eastern Bureau. Were you sensing a disquiet about developments in Lebanon at this time? Did you have the feeling that this had been picked up by higher ups, either in the White House or the Secretary of State, and all, and was getting out of the hands of the professionals or not?

EVANS: My perception was that George Shultz, himself, who I consider a professional, felt that we should be more pro-active. The frustration I was privy to was the military frustration. They got caught between a rock and a hard place in this. With this policy, they were put in to do the job that they felt they should do, which is fight somebody and win, and then, get out of there. But instead, they were put in to stay. They were exposed increasingly to physical danger when it wasn't quite clear what they were staying for and where we were going, and what we were trying to do. The overriding frustration in the whole four years I was there, was about terrorism increasing from 1984 on. The focus of the Command was in combating terrorism. In 1985, we conducted one of the most successful counter terrorist operations ever in bringing the Achille hijackers down. It was very exciting. I was very much involved with that as we tried to find the Achille Lauro.

Q: Could you explain what the Achille Lauro situation was?

EVANS: I'm trying to remember when it was. I think it was in 1985. The Achille Lauro was an Italian flag cruise ship which was hijacked by a band of, . . . I forget which group it was. It was one of the Palestinian groups.

Q: It was the Abbas group or something.

EVANS: Abu Abbas.

Q: I don't know if you call it left or right wing, but it was not mainline.

EVANS: It may have been the PLFP, Palestinian Liberation Front, Popular Front Liberation, or one of those. We all know, that there is the PLO and then there are all these other groups, certainly not doing something that the PLO disagrees with. Anyway, these hijackers boarded the ship to make a statement. In the process, they pushed a man named Leon Klinghoffer, who was in a wheelchair, off the boat, and to his death.

Q: He was an American citizen and Jewish.

EVANS: He was a Jewish American citizen. For one reason or another, they took a dislike to him, or he talked back to them, or whatever. He was chucked overboard. That brought tension to the whole thing. That is for sure. Then, the hijackers took off in a boat. We, in the Command in London, tried to find the boat. Well, obviously the Sixth Fleet was looking for it. But, the charts and the reporting responsibility were up in London. I remember sitting with the intelligence people in our big room with a map, pinpointing all the . . .

Q: When you say the boat, you mean the cruise ship?

EVANS: No. Well, yes, the cruise ship itself. For a while, we couldn't find it. I forget the entire series of events. But the hijackers made their way to Egypt. They left Egypt in a plane and we intercepted the plane in midair. That was extremely exciting. That was directed by the Operations people working with the Intelligence people in London. Eventually, the plane was brought down, escorted down in Italy.

Q: Sicily and Sigonella.

EVANS: I see that you are well aware of this.

Q: Yes, it was a major incident.

EVANS: I got involved, at that point in liaising with the Italians and others. It was tremendous that it was happening so fast. Well, as you may recall, the Italians were highly embarrassed that this happened. Instead of this event being welcomed, it was a major political embarrassment for the Italians. They eventually ended up letting the hijacker go, as I recall.

Q: They let Abu Abbas, but not the hijackers themselves.

EVANS: That was infuriating to the admiral and the military, of course. There was this constant problem that if you catch somebody, and it's true in local police work here too, you finally catch the bad guy and then due to one thing or another, social pressures, or whatever, you have to let him go. It is very frustrating for law enforcement authorities. Nevertheless, the mid-air interception was a great achievement by the U.S. Navy. That was one of the highlight operations that took place at the headquarters. After the bombing of the Marine barracks, the attention of the Command was really more and more focused on counter-terrorism. That was the thrust of every daily briefing. That was the thrust of the intelligence activities. That was something I was brought into increasingly. I was amazed at how much evidence there was of both the Iranian, and particularly the Syrian, support for all of this terrorism. Much has been written about that. We have never acted with the Syrians in the way I think we should have given the hard evidence that we had about their support for terrorism. That is another issue.

Q: Did you sense a frustration while sitting in on briefings and planning? A navy is not designed to combat terrorism, as an army is not designed to do that. You do the best you can. Did you sense real frustration on the part of our military that you were looking at?

EVANS: Of course, absolute frustration and hostility to our own political decision makers, who, in the opinion of the military, were not acting on the intelligence that we either knew or developed. They were simply letting these terrorists continue. That was the major frustration, plus being sitting ducks. Until we were taken out of Lebanon. Still, there was a feeling by the Navy that they were being used for political reasons that were not necessarily clear and could not necessarily be justified. These were political decisions that were taken by civilians comfortably sitting back in their plush offices in Washington or having a drink in the Army-Navy Club discussing the death of young men at sea. That was the feeling and it was a very strong one. In a sense, I shared that frustration with them. I must say, I developed a very high regard for our Navy.

Q: Were you involved with, or was it on your watch, when there was the bombing of Libya?

EVANS: Yes, that was one of the last things. That was in April of 1986.

Q: Could you explain what started that and how your office dealt with that?

EVANS: Parallel to the events going on in and off of Lebanon, was the ongoing concern about Libya and its activities in and support of terrorism, sometimes linked to the Syrian nexus, sometimes completely independent of it. Qadhafi, head of Libya, was emboldened, I think by other terrorist activities going on. He, perhaps, felt that he wanted to show them that he could play the terrorist game too. In any event, the Libyans were active in Europe. There was the bombing of the Berlin nightclub, La Belle, which was regarded as the result of Libyan terrorists, although I think you have argued that it could have been the Syrians, too. In any event, the official U.S. policy was that it was the Libyans who were involved. The second Libyan activity took place in the Gulf of Sidra, which is the Gulf north of Libya, in the Mediterranean, and brings into question how far a country has sovereign rights from ashore. The Libyans felt that they owned all of the Gulf of Sidra, which makes a large indentation. Libya, in effect, is like a "U." The Gulf of Sidra goes down the middle. Libya felt that they should have the whole area of the Gulf of Sidra. The U.S. position was that it was part of the Mediterranean Sea and, therefore, the Libyans only had sovereignty three miles off the coast. That meant the middle of the Gulf of Sidra was international waters, according to our theory. It was a constant challenge that the Libyans would try to assert their right to the whole of the Gulf of Sidra, we would then assert our right to be there and there would be some limited hostilities. As I recall, the issue that directly lead to the decision to bomb Libya in April of 1986, was the alleged Libyan role in the La Belle bombing in Berlin. That operation was the third major highlight, if you want to call it that, of the time I was there. It was taken in conjunction with the Air Force operating out of Mildenhall (U.S. Air Force base, England). One of the tricky diplomatic questions was getting flight permission for these Air Force planes to get down to Libya. The French refused them permission. So, the planes had to fly a longer way to get there, avoiding France. That was one issue. There were also other issues about the Naval forces. The Navy actually was more of a support for that operation which was a bombing mission carried about by Mendenhall. As I recall, there were Naval operations in support of it. We worked, of course, extremely closely with the U.S. Air Force.

Q: Was there any dialogue at that time? We had the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean with carrier forces with a hell of a lot of planes and all. All of a sudden, we say we have to use F-111s, which are Air Force planes based in England. It became a very sticky diplomatic incident. France got mad. We got very mad at France. Was there any discussion that you recall about people saying, "Hell, the Sixth Fleet can do this? Why do we need these Air Force planes?"

EVANS: Yes, I think there was. I'm trying to remember if there was any answer that I was aware of. The Navy felt very proprietary about Libya. Libyans are our problem. In fact, I went to Malta to talk with our ambassador about Libyan use of Malta for terrorist purposes. Speaking of that, you may recall that it was in Malta that the Libyan role was established that it was involved in the bombing of PanAm 103 in December of 1988. The Navy, I think, was a little chagrined that the Air Force was called in. But the explanation was that the Air Force could fly higher than the Navy. There was tremendous concern that no pilot be shot down and captured. I think that was one of the major reasons. Therefore, I think it was felt that the Air Force, even though there was this longer distance to go, could carry out a cleaner or safer raid than the Navy. There might have been more casualties with the Navy which were unacceptable. Obviously, the last thing you would want is a captured U.S. military person. Then, you have to go and give away everything that you intended to be getting back. I think that was the main reason.

Q: Did you have much diplomatic footwork to do after this Libyan raid, to explain what we were doing and all?

EVANS: We all did in a sense. Particularly, when, as usual these things end up killing a lot of civilians. However, the point that perhaps we made was that we were sending a message to Qadhafi. It appeared after that time that Qadhafi did hold back on his terrorist operations. You could argue that PanAm 103 was his answer to it. I don't know if that was the case or not. It was two years later, and there may have been other reasons why PanAm 103 happened. I'm not totally sure that the Libyans were the ones involved in PanAm 103. In general, it was felt that it was successful because it did stop the very prevalent and overt terrorist operations of Libya.

Q: What about in the Atlantic, actions against the Soviet. Did that come under your admiral's jurisdiction? I'm thinking about various exercises run up near the Kola Peninsula, and things like that.

EVANS: Anything that was to the east of Iceland was under our command, yes. All the submarines that came down passed Norway, between Iceland and United Kingdom, were definitely tracked by our Command and under our authority. The Naval presence in Iceland, however, I think was under the Atlantic Command. But we worked very closely with it. The space from Iceland to the United Kingdom was under our command.

Q: The Secretary of Navy was touting a very aggressive stance of the U.S. Navy that we weren't going to wait for the Soviets to come to us. We were going to go up the Kola Peninsula. What were the professional Navy people were talking about the posturing, or maybe it wasn't the posturing, but the attitude of the Secretary of Navy. How did they react at that point?

EVANS: I don't remember that being a major issue at the headquarters, frankly. I felt that the Navy headquarters was very confident in its ability to track submarines and to be one step ahead of the Soviet Navy, although they certainly respected the Soviet Navy. I don't remember that being an issue, frankly. At least it was not one that I was in any way involved in.

Q: What about the Soviet Navy and the Mediterranean? Was the feeling that it could be taken care of rather quickly if a war started?

EVANS: Yes. Again, that was the focus of every morning's Intelligence briefing. Exactly how many, what type, and where were Soviet naval craft, how many were in the Black Sea ready to exit and about to come out of repair, that sort of thing. I never remember a situation where it was felt that the Soviets had more than we felt we could take care of. The U.S. Navy presence in the Mediterranean was probably the biggest political-military challenge that the Command had. Because whether it was Spain, France, or if you went around the rim of the Mediterranean, there were various problems and they had to be assayed. There was some dispute over the repair facility that we wanted to lease or use or something like that, or the participation, or the rights' issue or court call issues or hostility issues. There were times, of course, when we simply couldn't dock in Greece because of hostilities and terrorist threats. Then, there was the Turkish/Greece conflict, although that was more of a NATO issue. We had continuing issues with the Italians of various sorts, although I must say, the Italians were regarded by the U.S. military as the bedrock of our existence and mission in the Mediterranean. Without Italy, everybody knew we wouldn't have a leg to stand on. I traveled with one or another admiral to Spain several times, to France, to Italy, twice a month, probably, to Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Israel, Tunisia, Morocco, Malta, Cyprus to try to resolve problems. Some of the travel was protocol. That was another part of my function too. Every time the admiral entertained, unless it was a small private dinner, I was invited as a matter of protocol. The military headquarters hosted an enormous number of visits. There was a separate English woman protocol officer who did all the seating. She would talk to me a lot about people and try to get biographies of the ambassadors that were coming. We would have dinners, and we had to do guest lists. In addition to a very active military command, it was also a tremendous protocol and diplomatic military command. That was a lot of the activity.

Q: What was the feeling of the headquarters toward France and its military?

EVANS: I think that the sentiment I felt was that the French didn't really pull their fair share. They were trying to get the benefits of working with us and being allied with us, without paying their fair dues.

Q: How about the Greek/Turkish dispute? Was that a thorn in your side?

EVANS: That was mostly a NATO issue. For example, when my admiral went there, we went to discuss strictly bilateral American/Greek or American/Turkish issues. When the admiral went there in his NATO hat, he went there with the other POLAD from Naples. Then, they discussed Naples issues. The NATO admiral in his NATO hat forbade himself in his other hat from talking about NATO issues. The Greek/Turkish dispute was one that I had enough of back in PM. I was glad to be out of it. We were aware of the problems which occasionally it made it difficult to deal particularly with the Greeks, on whom we were very dependent for facilities and repair facilities, and basing facilities. The Greeks were very supportive of the PLO, we felt, and lenient toward terrorism in general. They were not reliable partners in that sense. There was unhappiness with that. Turkey was viewed, again, from our national point of view, as a very strong ally. Our military seemed to have a really good relationship with the Turks. But the Greeks were difficult.

Q: In 1986, you left POLAD. Where did you go?

EVANS: I came back to Washington. As you can imagine, after coming off of an assignment like that, it was a let-down. I hung around for a while. Then, I was assigned in the fall to the Counter-Terrorism Office, which was headed by Jerry Bremer at the time. CT, I think it was called.

Q: You did that from 1986 until?

EVANS: So, that was the fall of 1986. There I had sort of an epiphany. This must have been in November, no October. I was delegated to be the office's point man to go out and talk to the French and read the riot act to them about their bad behavior in treating with terrorists. I was given all sorts of briefing materials and told to take a very hard position with the people that I was to interface with. I think two days before I was due to leave on my trip, there was a great flurry of excitement. People said, "Come, look at the TV." There was, Bud McFarlane, as I recall, in Iran with his hand in the cookie jar.

Q: We are talking about the Iran-Contra Affair.

EVANS: That was the first breaking news that we had, that in fact, we were negotiating with Iran. Well, the hypocrisy of the whole thing was so obvious. I remember going back to my office and reading these briefing points that I was meant to make to the French about never dealing with the terrorists, and never trading with Iran. The French had been negotiating with Iran about something or another. So, I told Jerry that I couldn't stay in the office. It was the closest I came to quitting. I wasn't going to quit the Foreign Service, because I had too many bills to pay. I said that I couldn't work in CT. There were some exciting times though. I was there when we were tracking the Hezbollah hostage, Father Lawrence Jenco. I was in the Operations Center that night that Oliver North was out there in a plane. I didn't even know who Oliver North was. Of course, we learned. It was exciting. It was another activity. But, as I say, I just couldn't take the hypocrisy of it. I remember Jerry Bremer, whom I respected, and as you know, went on to work with, and who may still be with Kissinger & Associates. He said, "Well, what is it that you want? Do you want a larger office? Do you want a different title?" I said, "No, I just want to get out of here. I can't take this hypocrisy." I then had, as inevitably with one's career, a series of short-term assignments, as I recall, in spring or summer of 1987. I was doing promotion panels.

Maybe a good point to break would be in September of 1987, I got a telephone call from Warren Zimmerman, who was out in Vienna. Warren Zimmerman was head of our delegation to the CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe), a follow-up meeting in Vienna which was started in 1986. Warren Zimmerman put in a call for me particularly to see if I would come out on a week's notice to be one of his three senior negotiators on what was called "Basket Two," the economic, scientific, technical, and environmental issues. I had not had anything to do with the CSCE particularly, although, I was aware of it. I had never really had much experience in multilateral negotiations. Going to Vienna appealed to me. As I was not being appropriately employed at the time in Washington, I jumped at the chance. I got out there, I think, the 27th of September 1987. The main reason Warren told me that he was really getting me out there was because they had somebody who wasn't senior enough. They wanted a more senior person to take over the economic basket. The other countries weren't showing enough respect for our negotiator. I think he also wanted to bring a new face in from Washington with a certain senior rank, primarily, to take on the Germans. The Germans were pushing for an economic conference. The contacts at CSCE were seen as too cozy with the Soviets and the East Bloc. My marching orders were to be the "bad cop," essentially, and take on the Germans. Whenever the Germans proposed something, I was to knock it down. I was to be Warren's "bad cop," in dealing primarily with the Germans and taking a more firm line on our economic interests.

Q: Okay, well then, we will pick it up next time with when you were a CSCE in 1987. You already mentioned that you were there basically to hold down the Germans. We haven't talked about what the issues were and what you were doing.

Q: It is the 7th of January 1998. In the first, place, I would like to get the dates. Where you in 1987?

EVANS: We are in the fall of 1987 in Vienna. I was detailed from EUR to the U.S. delegation to the then, CSCE, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which subsequently became the OSCE, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in about 1993 or 1994. In any event, it was the CSCE at that time. This was before the fall of Soviet communism, and before the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was still an East-West confrontation situation, somewhat ameliorated by Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika efforts. Nevertheless, we had essentially a tripartite set up in the CSCE which had existed since its beginning: the East, the West, and the neutral, and then the non-aligned. All the meetings were held in one or the other of the neutrally aligned capitals, such as Belgrade or Madrid - before it became a member of NATO - Stockholm, Vienna (frequently), Geneva, Malta, occasionally, subsequent subsidiary meetings. The feeling was that this meeting, which had started in early 1986, would last almost a year and a half. It was nearing its end, maybe in three months. When I went out in September of 1987, I was strictly on TDY (Temporary Duty) assignment from EUR.

Q: TDY meaning?

EVANS: Temporary duty assignment. As I said earlier, to take over at a senior officer level the second basket, which was the economic, scientific, environmental basket. That is what we called the things. The first basket being security. The second basket being human rights, which was where much of the interest in the CSCE has been, of course. I was looking, and we all were looking, to wind up by Christmas 1987. Needless to say, that deadline was not met. We came home for Christmas and went back in January of 1988. The meeting continued on for another year and longer. It did not end until January of 1989.

Q: Who was leading the delegation?

EVANS: Warren Zimmerman was the head of the delegation with rank of ambassador. There were two deputy heads. One was Bob Frowick, who had the rank of ambassador. I had known Bob from East European work earlier. The second deputy head was Sam Wise, of the Congressional Helsinki Commission. I should not say, "Congressional". Everybody thinks of it as Congressional, when in fact, it's an interagency commission heavily dominated by, located in and run by the Congress. But, in fact, legally it is an inter-agency commission with representatives from the State, Defense and Commerce departments as well as a major contingent from both the House and Senate. Sam Wise was there to handle Human Rights, basket three. Bob Frowick handled the Security and Principles basket. Principles were divided up. Bob handled a number and Sam handled some of the others.

Q: What do you mean when you say "principles?"

EVANS: "Principles" were like the 10 Commandments or the Bill of Rights in our Constitution. The "principles" were the essential guidelines about the conduct of states that were written down and agreed to in the original Helsinki Final Act. It was signed by 35 original countries in Helsinki in 1976, I guess it was. Anyway, Bob Frowick was in charge of Basket One, Security. I was in charge of Basket Two, Economics. Sam Wise was in charge of Basket Three, Human Rights. The three of us, of course, reported to Warren Zimmerman. Each of us had contingents underneath us. I had the smallest contingent, which was one individual. He was a very good individual from the Helsinki Convention and a State Department middle-grade officer who came out from time to time. As I said earlier, my major initial focus, anyway, was on the German issue. That preoccupied a lot of my tactical efforts. The rapporteur for our group was Swiss. Each of these baskets of groups had a neutral or non-aligned rapporteur. In our case, we had a very good, quite colorful character from Switzerland, a Swiss diplomat. He made my job easier because he was a French Swiss and he hated the Germans with a passion. We connived together, to some extent. The Germans did not help their case by having as head of their Basket Two team a very obnoxious individual. He was very pompous, just personally extremely obnoxious. In the end, we succeeded in the mission of trying to keep the Germans from hosting a major economic conference. Although by the end, the mandate changed in the year and a half I was there. We wound up in January of 1989, with a number of changes along the East-West fault line and some concessions by the Germans. The so-called "Bonn Economic Conference" was agreed in the final document. But it was not as far reaching as the Germans had originally wanted.

Q: When we are talking about the Germans, we are talking about West Germany?

EVANS: Yes, that's right.

Q: What were the issues? What were we concerned about with the Germans?

EVANS: Mostly, it was a sense in Washington that the Germans wanted to host this economic conference and play too large a role in taking over and controlling economic and commercializations with the East Bloc. That was the major concern. The whole point of the economic conference was not for other Western countries. It was to bring the East Europeans and Soviets to Bonn, in this case, for a conference. The American Administration - this was the Reagan Administration - felt that they did not want the Germans playing such a major role in having such a platform as this conference would give them to take over economic relations with the East Bloc. We had no way of foreseeing that the East Bloc would disappear in a year or two. That was really the essence of it. Unless you want to say that German economic penetration of the Eastern Bloc was strategic. There were some individuals in the National Security Council who felt the Germans were getting much too cozy with and extending much too favorable terms to the Eastern countries.

Q: As we saw it at that time, was it more a problem that the Germans might make too many concessions to what we would consider our adversary, the Communist Bloc, rather than concern about beating us out economically in Eastern Europe?

EVANS: Yes, I think that is a good point. There was a feeling that they would not hold the line on our export control regime. That they would both grant credits and permit the transfer of technology, which was a problem throughout the time I was there. Also, undercut us by extending better financial terms, better government backed credits than we, in our system, could manage. It was a combination, I think, of not wanting them to get the markets, and, not wanting them to make concessions which, in many cases, were viewed as strategic.

Q: How did you feel about it? As you were talking to your German, and I use the word advisedly, "adversaries", was this perception in Washington a valid perception or was it modified by what you were doing as you were dealing with it on the ground?

EVANS: To be honest with you, I was sort of amused by it because I didn't think the Germans holding an economic conference would affect either our trade or security interest that much. A fact that was eventually agreed to, I think showed that. Since that was the mandate I had, I rather enjoyed it because it gave me a specific focus. Some of the other members of my team didn't have this. In the area of Human Rights, we were pressing for certain concessions, along with a whole range of criminal, civil and legal arrangements: voting, freedom of trading, freedom of movement, guarantees from various kinds of arbitrary government treatment, and that sort of thing. This was unique in the sense that there was no other case in the whole CSCE on the Western side, at least, where one country was known to be out to get the other. It was quite obvious when I was introduced. Warren Zimmerman made it quite clear to the Germans that evidence was coming in, not only to hold the line against their proposal, but to beat it down, and keep it from taking place. That was my mission. To the extent that remained policy from Washington, I fulfilled it. The first evaluation I got from Warren was full of praise about how I had maneuvered the Germans into a position where their case had been shelved. That was the first year. As I say, in many cases, throughout the years, when one knows instinctively that Washington policy doesn't make all that much sense, either you follow it, or you don't, I guess. In this case, partly because my German "adversaries" were so obnoxious, it became more enjoyable. If they had been personally more pleasant perhaps, more reasonable, it would have been a harder job. Beating up on the Germans was a pleasure, I must say. Partly, also, to be honest with you, the Economic, the Basket Two, was always the weak sister of the three baskets. Everybody was interested in Security. Everybody was interested in Human Rights. Very few people were interested in economics. Eventually, as the conference wore on, the environmental part of that mandate became much more important. We can talk about that in a minute. I got much more involved in environmental issues in the last six months of the conference than I did in economic issues.

Q: Back to this German thing. Here you had the United States, the Soviet Union, the Eastern Bloc, and the European Economic Union all in there. What about the Brits or the French, as far as your job of stopping this conference from being in Bonn?

EVANS: A lot of the dynamics depended on who was in the chair of the then EC, the European Community. When the Danes, or the French, or the British were in the chair, it made life easier. When the Germans were in the chair, and had the rapporteur been Austrian, it would have been much more difficult. The key factor was the rapporteur, who determined the agenda, who did all the drafts, who organized the secret little meetings and the working sessions. Being anti-German, as he was, made my life much easier. I could have had a Viennese diplomat, as such was the case in Basket One. Then it would have been more difficult. We had these groups within groups. Of course, every morning, before the main meeting, the EC would have its caucus. Twice a week the NATO group would have it caucus. So, the EC would meet first. Then, they would come in with a position to the NATO group. The NATO group was where we had some initial leverage, of course, and we were trying to set up a united Western position before we went into the full meeting with the East, the neutrals, and the non-aligned. The Norwegians played a key role in the NATO forum in supporting us and were very much against the Germans. As I say, they were privy to things that they passed on to us, which were very helpful in that regard. I think a lot of these countries felt sort of awkward because they were in the European Community, and, to that extent, there was a need for solidarity with the Germans. On the other hand, they knew the United States was against Germany. Most of these countries had no great love for the Germans. Those were some of the dynamics.

Q: Did these other countries see the issue at the same way we did? At this stage I find it hard to envisage what the real problem was of having Germany host an economic conference. There are conferences, conferences, and conferences.

EVANS: Yes, that is a very good point. The real reason was that Washington didn't want the Germans to take the lead in this area. They didn't want them "out front," so to speak, making both trade and perhaps strategic concessions. I think many of the West Europeans were amused by this, puzzled. They didn't particularly see the reason for our position. I felt like I was a Darth Vader when I came into the room because everybody knew that I was going to veto and talk against every single proposal the Germans put forward and language that would lead up to an agenda. It wasn't just the conference. There were a lot of other areas that the Germans were pushing to liberalize trade and strategic trade, particularly technology trade, that I was also under instructions to oppose. It was a game obviously. When the Germans spoke, everybody looked at me, waiting. When I spoke, everybody looked at the Germans, knowing their reaction. If the West Europeans were going to throw in their lot, they basically felt they would throw in their lot with the United States, I think, although they were constrained by this European Community solidarity with the Germans. You are right. Of course, the East Bloc knew of this. Everybody knew of this confrontation, which generally took place most heatedly in our NATO caucus. Naturally, we tried not to let it boil over into the general meetings. Both neutral and the non-aligned knew very well. The East Bloc got a whiff of it too. They were amused by it. It got so bad at one point, that the West German complained about me to Warren Zimmerman. We had a big showdown at the OK Corral. Of course, Warren supported me, and said that was what I was under instruction to do. Also, that this was our position. The Germans said, "This is ridiculous." It escalated at one point very heatedly. Both Warren and the German who was head of their delegation, got involved in the thing.

Q: Did the Germans at any point, try to, sort of woo you, or not?

EVANS: Yes. Absolutely. They were constantly inviting us to very expensive luncheons and very nice restaurants with very nice wine, that sort of thing.

Q: As these meetings progressed, was there a sudden shift because Washington was no longer interested in preventing this meeting or not? How did this play out?

EVANS: Yes. I think I should put this German campaign in better perspective. This was the original reason for my being assigned. This was for the first three months I was there, from September through December of 1987. This was the main focus. When we got back in January of 1988, things were developing in the East that made it clear that in fact the East was less of a threat, less hostile, and things were moving in democratic ways. Many of the Eastern countries, notably the Hungarians, even the Bulgarians, although not the East Germans nor the Czechs, were moving toward many of our positions. The Hungarians were overtly flirting with the West and defying the Soviets on many occasions. The dynamics did change during the spring and by the fall of 1988. This German crusade was largely over, but not entirely, because we had spent so much time in months before, digging our trenches and setting up our battlements, that we simply couldn't back down completely. The main thrust of the mandate changed as circumstances changed. My interest and the focus of our discussions evolved more into environmental issues in the fall of 1988. A year after I had arrived there, I was, in many cases, doing battle with my own government about environmental issues. That was one of the bigger changes, that and working in the corridors and restaurants and coffee bars with some of the East Bloc representatives to try to get concessions from them in certain areas, which I can go into in a minute.

Q: What were the environmental concerns that you were dealing with?

EVANS: They were reminiscent of this global warming issue that is going on now. Pollution of the air, pollution of the sea were the main issues. Here, I was, again, under instructions from Washington to hold the line against the European community. Now, our main adversary was the British, no, the Norwegians and the Danes, particularly the Danes, who were determined to push through very progressive, strict emission controls for air and water pollution. I was wrong in saying the British. The British were very reluctant to take steps and were totally out of sync in the European community meetings with their EC colleagues. They were under very strict instructions from London not to make any concessions on both water and also air, particularly water pollution. The Germans were very much to the fore and pushing for strict emissions controls and setting standards and dates that would have to be adhered to. The Danes and most of the neutral and non-aligned were totally for this. A lot of countries didn't really care. Of course, the East Bloc and the Russians, the Soviets, were against it, knowing that they couldn't commit to stopping the awful pollution that was in their country. It didn't really seem to matter to them that much because it was something everyone knew they wouldn't adhere to anyway. So, the dynamics changed.

In this case, I would like to relate one story that I was actually very proud of. At one point, I think it was on water pollution. It doesn't matter. Let's say it was water pollution. We were in a full meeting and there was virtual unanimity around the table that we should adopt strict language against certain types of water pollution. I went back to Washington with urgent cables and telephone calls trying to see if there was any wiggle room. Couldn't I escape from this strict mandate that I had from Washington, not to agree to these? Anyway, I remember, I took it upon myself to say that the United States would agree to the language that had been worked up. There was, as I recall, practically a round of clapping, applause for my doing this. I then had the task of going back and selling it to Washington. Eventually, they did cave in. So, my position was justified. I knew that the opposition was, from some bureaucrat in some cubby hole who represents Washington and has his feet dug in, refusing to move on an issue. Nobody else really cares that much. On this particular issue, I guess, there was a certain amount of that. In any event, I felt emboldened by the fact that I had been there a year and I could agree to a few things that I felt should be agreed to, and then worry about what Washington would say afterwards. It was easier to do that in the environmental area where I felt very strongly about it than it was with the German area. It shows the personal element, the human factor in all of our work.

There is another issue that I would like to mention that was also in the environmental area, which I was really proud of. If I had to name some of my achievements during my whole diplomatic career, this is one of the top ones. As we were getting to the end of the negotiations in the fall, I guess, November 1988, one of the issues was agreeing to the so-called "follow up" meetings in various areas. The German economic conference was one. The Bulgarians had also proposed an environmental conference in Sofia, to be held in the fall of 1989. This was also not something the United States was particularly eager to see take place because we basically didn't want any of these East Bloc proposals to take place. We were reluctant to have the Bulgarians host an environmental conference where things might get out of hand, from our point of view. I had lunch with my Bulgarian counterpart, Toger Cheroff, in a very nice, little Viennese restaurant on a little side street, not far from our embassy. We both were trying to work out our positions. Basically, everybody left it up to the two of us to work out the language. We had by this time reluctantly agreed to a meeting in Bulgaria. The Bulgarians wanted language that would accommodate the transfer of technology, which it turned out, was agricultural technology, although that was not clear initially. We wanted to insert a provision that the meeting be open to the public. That would have to be the concession that the Bulgarians would make. It was a major concession for them because events at that time were already showing that the situation in the Eastern countries was getting a little out of control and the hardline Communists were on the run in many of these countries. The populations were getting restive. The appeal of democracy in the West was getting overpowering. We worked out a deal that the Bulgarians agreed the meeting would be open to the public. In exchange for that, I agreed that we would agree to the language permitting the transfer of agricultural technology. I had to sell that to Washington which eventually I did. I argued that it was a very useful, very good trade off with having this open meeting. The result of this was that the mandate for the Sofia environmental meeting included a provision that it was open to the public. That meeting was held in, I think, October of 1989. There were huge crowds of people from the West and locally that flocked to that meeting, environmentalists being also democrats and anti-communists by large. The meeting was open to the public. The meeting got stormed, virtually, by all these people. That, in turn, lead to demonstrations against the government. The Communist government fell. I really felt that by working out this language to permit the meeting to be held, I had directly played a role in the overthrow of the Communist government in Bulgaria. Interestingly enough, my colleague, this Bulgarian Toger Cheroff, who I suspected was himself not a very hardline Communist Bulgarian, went on to become the Deputy Foreign Minister of Bulgaria under the new democratic government. That was a very satisfying incident.

Q: The Bush Administration came in toward the close of your time?

EVANS: Well, that gets into the dynamics of the closure of this meeting. We are in now, let's say, late 1988. There was a sense of the Communist glacier receding or the Communist structure cracking up, but nobody foresaw what would happen a year later. In the 1988 election, George Bush had been elected President. We knew that a similar mandate and instructions would probably flow from Washington. In mid-December of 1988 . . . I might mention a historical note - that two young women came to see me were friends of my secretary. I chatted with them because my secretary said one of them was studying Russian or something. I guess two days later, I got word that PanAm 103 had been blown up. These two girls were on the plane. We were very concerned that some of our staff was on the plane, but they weren't. That was an experience that hit us very hard.

Q: This was a plane that was blown up apparently by Libyan agents?

EVANS: That I guess is the best analysis people have come up with. There was some evidence that they had used transit facilities in Malta, as I recall. There was also evidence that the Popular Liberation Organization of Palestine had been involved in this. I forget why. I had, as you know, from my previous discussion, spent four and one-half years working in London with the Navy and dealing largely with ending terrorism. I forget how I saw them, but I did follow the fact that these PFLP cells were operating in Germany. The Germans had made some arrests shortly before. To me, it is still a murky issue. There is some thought that the Iranians might have been behind it or have sponsored it in retaliation for the shoot down in the August of the Iranian passenger Airbus over the Persian Gulf. I don't think we ever knew for sure. Officially, it was the Libyans who did it. Anyway, that was a defining moment because it was a great concern to us. There were a lot of late-night frantic calls back and forth. Everybody was trying to account for staffers because at that point, our conference had more or less come to an end and some of those staffers started going home for Christmas break.

On a personal front, I might say that this period was very meaningful to me because having been divorced about 10 years before, I had met someone I became very fond of and invited her from Boston over to Vienna. We decided to get married in November of 1988. So, Vienna was very special to us. When we broke for Christmas, I suggested and indeed urged that we get married quite promptly during the holiday break so that when we came back, she could come back as my wife. We were anticipating being there for at least another six months into the summer of 1989. In an extraordinary effort, my fiancï¿½e managed to arrange a wedding in Boston on the eighth of January, nine years tomorrow. We did get married and left the next day to come back to Vienna. We had set the date for the wedding, thinking that we would have a week or 10 days after the wedding, without the necessity of rushing back to Vienna to get on with the work, because there was no firm deadline. But around Christmas time, George Shultz suddenly focused on the CSCE and the fact that he would no longer be Secretary of State in the new Bush Administration. He decided that he wanted to wind up the CSCE meeting on his watch. He wanted to come out to Vienna to conclude the thing with a big ceremonial meeting of foreign ministers. This would be the great happening event of his career as Secretary of State. That was the driving force that forced the Vienna meeting to come to an abrupt close on the 17th of January, or whatever it was, two days before the official inauguration of the President. George Shultz did come out to Vienna. He danced and had a great time. George Shultz came out to Vienna at the head of the delegation and we had a huge ceremony at Schoenbrunn Palace, put on by the Austrians who are certainly unrivaled in this ability. The meeting concluded with many quick compromises. You know, when you are told you are going to finish a meeting, all of a sudden you make accommodations right and left. So, a lot of these things that floated for years and months suddenly were given up. On the Eastern side, they were suddenly making compromises that we could not have foreseen a few months ago. The Vienna Concluding Document, for the Vienna follow up meeting in January 1989, was a very far reaching document. It included major concessions from the East on Human Rights, particularly. Certain security issues established the groundwork for the conventional arms mechanism in Europe. It had all sorts of provisions for economic exchanges. The Bonn Agreement went through. The Sofia Agreement went through. Of course, within nine months after that, the whole political situation changed and the agreement that we thought was so fantastic and far reaching was, in fact, left in the dust by events.

Q: What was the role of the Soviets during the time you were there? Were they calling the shots?

EVANS: The Soviet delegation, at least in our basket, had completely lost control of things. Their client states in Eastern Europe were going way out on limbs and it was interesting to observe that. They were getting conflicting signals themselves and agreeing to things that we thought they never would agree to. Across the board, the old fault lines of east and west were starting to disappear. The Soviets, compared to previous Soviet behavior that I experienced, were remarkable.

Q: You left there when? Where did you go?

EVANS: So, at the end of the meeting, I took the occasion to finally get in a couple weeks of honeymoon. It was not the best time of year, being in early February. My new wife and I went to Budapest and Prague, where I had friends; American Ambassador in Bucharest, Mark Palmer, and Ted Russell, in Prague. We stayed with both of them. That was, for my wife, quite an eye opener. It was the first time she had visited Eastern Europe. The Czechs were still pretty repressive. The Hungarians had opened up enormously.

Then toward the end of February, I came back to Washington. I was still on detail for over a year and a half. It had been extended every six months. So, I was still under EUR's purview. I came back at the beginning of a new administration. Although it is one of the most frustrating experiences in the Foreign Service, you have a good job. You have established yourself. You have responsibility. All of a sudden, you go back home, and unless you specifically lock something up, you start all over from scratch, looking for a job. I was handling two things. I was handling my new marriage and finding a house and getting acclimated because I had not lived in the United States for seven years since I went to London in 1982. Of course, a lot of people have been gone longer than that. But I did not have a house to come back to. I didn't have any particular base, as it were, to come back to. We started out our married life fresh and I had to look for a fresh new job too. To make a long story, it took almost a year. It was not until early 1990 that I was assigned to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the so-called Helsinki Commission as the Senior Advisor to be responsible for all their activities dealing with the Communist countries, the Soviet Union and the East European countries, which turned out to be an incredibly interesting and meaningful job. I stayed there until I retired in October of 1995. I was there a little over five years.

Q: Where were you located?

EVANS: The Helsinki Commission staff is located in what used to be called Annex II, on the House side of the Congress. It has just been renamed the Ford House Office Building. Some people remember it as the FBI headquarters, Annex II in years gone by. They were rather modest accommodations. I traded any idea of luxurious office or secretarial support, for an extraordinary opportunity to have a lot of leeway in what I wanted to do, vis-a vis the Commission's overall mandate to implement the Helsinki Agreements, particularly in dealing with the Soviet Union. The Commission had a parliamentary exchange program under the auspices of the U.S. Congress and the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union. My first task was to organize that meeting. However, events transpired such that in the time of the meeting, things were starting to collapse in the Soviet Union. In the fall of 1990, I organized a first trip, which was a major trip, to the Baltics. It was an extraordinary experience because we decided that the Commission would take the lead in the U.S. Government to monitor elections. The Commission had a very small staff of not more than 15 people. We monitored elections in all the then Soviet republics, including the three Baltic states. During 1990, in Yugoslavia, I spent probably two or three weeks of every month on the road. I monitored elections in all the six Yugoslav republics. As I say, we organized this major trip to visit the Baltic states to demonstrate Congressional support for restoration of Baltic independence. The tricky thing about this delegation was that there were, I think, a dozen Congressmen, and one senator, Senator D'Amato. We determined that we would not fly to Moscow first and then go to the Baltics. That was the traditional way. If you wanted to visit one of the constituent republics in the Soviet Union, you had to fly to Moscow first, pay homage, as it were, to the Capitol, and then take a flight from there. We decided that for political reasons, for a political statement, now mind you, this was 1990, we would fly directly to the Baltics. Well, there was no way to fly directly to the Baltics. We had a U.S. Air Force plane, of course. The Soviets would not give permission for that plane to land in the Baltics. As I look back on it, I don't know that I would have the strength to do it now, the organization was incredible. We flew to Stockholm on the U.S. Air Force plane, overnighted in Stockholm, had a briefing there with Swedish officials about what was going on in the Baltics. Then, from Stockholm, we took a commercial flight to Riga. You can imagine the problem of getting Congressmen acclimated to a very small plane after the U.S. Air Force plane. Anyway, it was a good group. Wait a minute. I've got my time mixed up. This was in February of 1991. Sorry. This was after the Soviet attacks on and killing of protesters in both Riga and Vilnius.

Q: These are special, sort of commando type attacks, weren't they? They were attacks on radio stations, and the like.

EVANS: That's right. It was February of 1991 when this trip was organized. The idea was to show support to the Baltics and to stick it in the eye of the Soviets that they couldn't get away with this. So, anyway, we flew into Riga. Because we had short time, we had arranged that all three of the Presidents come to Riga. We would meet with them there. From there we did go to Vilnius as well. We did not go to Estonia on that trip. No, we did. I'm confused because in September of that year, we returned to the Baltics. I am trying to remember which was which. We went to Vilnius and the congressmen saw the radio station where the people had defied the tanks and where people had been killed. It was a very emotional and a very highly-charged visit, which I was very proud of. Of course, the Administration was appalled that we were doing this. They were not at all sympathetic.

Q: You're talking about our Administration?

EVANS: The U.S. Administration. They felt that we were meddling in U.S./Soviet relations and this would not be good. The Helsinki Commission was in the forefront with many initiatives during this period as transitioning from Communism to independent countries, way ahead of the Administration which was bogged down, and sort of the "old think," as it were. That trip was very successful. We then went onto Moscow where we met with Yeltsin. Yeltsin, as you may recall, had supported the Balkans against Gorbachev in their defiance on this police state issue. We met with Yeltsin in the so-called White House, in the Russian White House, near the American Embassy. At that point, Congressman Hoyer, who was our Commission Chairman, Steny Hoyer, from Maryland issued an invitation to Yeltsin to visit Washington. I mention this because during the summer, July, I think, anyway, the summer of 1991, we tried to follow up on this issue of Yeltsin coming to Washington. I played an interesting role with the Speaker's office in this because Yeltsin wouldn't come unless he was invited by the White House. The White House, however, would not invite Yeltsin because Yeltsin, by that time, had been elected President of the Russian/Soviet Federated Social Republic, a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. We were still enthralled with Gorbachev, officially. The White House said, "We will not invite Yeltsin. That would be a slap to Gorbachev." However, they let it be known to us that should Yeltsin end up in Washington, he could come to the White House, and perhaps, see the President. What we organized was that the Congress would invite Yeltsin. That is where I worked with the Speaker's office. This was all very exciting and hush-hush at the time. The Speaker extended the invitation. To reiterate, actually it was the invitation of Steny Hoyer that had occurred during our CODEL (Congressional delegation) trip. The Russians were told that they should play along with us because the invitation being issued by Congress would enable the White House to receive Yeltsin. So, Yeltsin would get his meeting at the White House, which is what he wanted. Yeltsin came and it was a very successful visit.

Q: Was this the time or was it earlier where staff members in the White House were trying to undercut Yeltsin by talking about his being a drunk?

EVANS: That was a previous time.

Q: By this time Yeltsin . . .

EVANS: Well, the fact that he won the election gave him new credentials. It was the first time a President of Russia had ever been elected, even though at that time, it was 1991, it was still the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union. The White House was still grumbling about it and still didn't want to insult Gorbachev by inviting Yeltsin. That was a significant involvement.

I want to go back to the fall of 1990. Now, I remember what I was doing there, in between visits to Yugoslavia. In August of 1990, I went on a CODEL with Senator DeConcini. It was a small CODEL to Albania. I was the first Foreign Service Officer to visit Albania officially since World War II. That gave me some satisfaction. As a result of that visit, and a follow-up visit, the next year in early April of 1991 we again were pushing for diplomatic recognition of Albania. This had not occurred. We were also for Albania joining CSCE. I was wrong earlier. It was 34 countries, and when Albania joined, it was 35. On both those initiatives, I had the satisfaction of playing a role in pushing for Albania's admittance to the CSCE, and for pushing the U.S. Government, through our efforts with the Helsinki Commission, of forcing the U.S. Government to recognize Albania. Then, in 1991, things started to move very quickly. The situation in Yugoslavia started to deteriorate across the board. Also, it started to deteriorate in Moscow. There was one of these follow up meetings from Vienna, the Human Rights meeting in Moscow, a long one, scheduled for virtually two months, September and October 1991. The Congressional delegation, of course, was set to go to that which was organized and headed by the Helsinki Commission in early September of 1991. As you remember, in August there was a coup attempt against Gorbachev. Yeltsin came to power, although Gorbachev survived sufficiently to come to the meeting. Anyway, I organized another major CODEL visit to the Soviet Union in September 1991. We went, first, in this case, to the Baltics, and made another visit. Again, the head of the U.S. Delegation recognized the Baltics as having regained their independence ahead of the United States government. The United States was one of the last countries to officially recognize the Baltic states after they had proclaimed their independence in late August and early September.

Q: Actually, we still had representation. We never . . .

EVANS: That was the ironic thing. We had a so-called Baltic desk at the State Department. Officially we didn't consider them to be part of the Soviet Union, as the other republics were. But, in fact, the Bush Administration was pretty slow at certain points. We dropped the ball in the summer of 1991, both with the Yugoslavia situation and in the Baltics and what was going on with the Soviet Union. The Bush Administration was still hanging onto Gorbachev, and still didn't want to antagonize the Soviets by prematurely, in their view, recognizing the Baltics, even though, something like 60 countries around the world had done it.

Q: Who was the person you went to, or the driving force within Congress about these initiatives? You either had to have somebody powerful on the staff or somebody within the Congress looking at it. Who was it?

EVANS: Steny Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, who alternated during my time there, when Congress was controlled by the Democrats, were the major forces. I had great respect for both of them. Steny Hoyer, basically, did things regarding Russia, and DeConcini did more on Eastern Europe. They and their immediate staff people, and some of our staff, came up with initiatives, too. The Helsinki Commission, at that time, was one of the most dynamic forces in the entire U.S. Government. I can say that. Man for man, the 15 people or so, on the staff, infinitely superior to any group of mid-grade officers I had worked with, in the State Department, as far as knowledge and ability to move quickly and deal with reality, that sort of thing. It was a great pleasure to be there. Unlike being in the administrative bureaucracy, you could, on your own initiative, either do something, or having been given an order by the Senator or the Congressman, you could then take off and do it. Within a day, sometimes, or a couple days, either issue a statement, hold a meeting, organize a trip, call an ambassador, whatever.

Q: None of this clearance nonsense.

EVANS: No clearance at all, except for one person. I was the State Department representative on the staff, as well as the Senior Advisor, and was, therefore, included in the senior management of the Commission. Fortunately, I got along very well with Steny Hoyer. We had a very close relationship of mutual respect. That made it rewarding.

Q: Were you getting any calls from the State Department, from your colleagues there, saying, "Hey, Evans, what the hell are you doing over there? You're supposed to be our man over there?"

EVANS: I think at the working level most of the people, the desk officer and office director people, sympathized with what we were doing. Any higher up calls we would deflect to the Congressman. For example, I was in Steny Hoyer's office organizing this trip to Russia in September of 1991. Steny picked up the phone and called Larry Eagleburger and said, "There is where I am going." There was great fear of Congress. Dennis DeConcini was Chairman of the Intelligence Committee, and Steny Hoyer was the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee that handled appropriations for State and Treasury. So, we didn't get any problem from the administration, except for some grumbling. Basically, I would make an effort to say, "Well, they are just Congressional staffers. They don't speak for the Administration," that sort of thing.

Q: It is still the CSCE, isn't it?

EVANS: Yes. I think the re designation was in 1994.

Q: Was there any feeling of satisfaction that, "Hell, in this whole thing, with the breakup of the Soviet Union, one of the major tools was the Helsinki Accords on Human Rights?"

EVANS: Absolutely. It was like being present at the destruction, put it that way. For me, with all my background and dedication to East-West issues and, particularly, me trying to do everything I could to try to bring about the end of Soviet communism, I couldn't imagine being in a place where I could have played a greater role. There was a great sense of rapport among the Commission staff that we were participating in historic events: the elections that we monitored, the breakups, some of which like the ones in Yugoslavia, turned out to be a disaster. It should not have happened. But that is another issue. It was the whole process, the creation of the new independent states in the Soviet Union and the new democracy, so-called, in Eastern Europe. Yes, there was a feeling that this was the result of the Helsinki Final Act Mandate and Principles, and all the meetings and agreements, that had lead up to it. Absolutely.

Q: Before we turn to Yugoslavia, you as an experienced Foreign Service Officer, and others within this OSCE who saw the new states develop, and looking at it, as a practical measure, we were being very careful. With James Baker being Secretary of State, no extra money was being put out to establish diplomatic relations. All of this was done on a shoe string. Was there any concern, as an indicator, that we weren't taking this new situation seriously?

EVANS: Not really. I think we were appalled by what we saw on a Congressional delegation that Dennis DeConcini led to Central Asia in April 1992. We were all appalled at the miserable, primitive circumstances of those embassies in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Pakistan. Those people were really struggling, often with skeleton staffs and some volunteers, and senior officers that had been recruited to come back. Some people that had been detailed from Western Europe. It was very patchwork. I did speak to Dennis about it. I must say, there was never any great movement in Congress to pound the table and say that we have to give up more money. The old, familiar and unfortunately, true perception of Congress was that embassies are there to accommodate our needs. It was basically there. They were very appreciative and wrote very flattering letters, and that sort of thing. But, there was not an effort or a sense commensurate with the need. It sort of broke my heart. I felt, "Well, I had done my time in Poland and Belgrade years before, and Moscow years before." I felt these people really were trailblazers, people who were going out, in particular, during that 1992 period. We also went on a trip to Yerevan, Armenia, which was in appalling economic circumstances. People in Georgia were still being gunned down in the street. Well, that happens. It was a rough area, that whole neighborhood. No, the Administration didn't seem to support its political efforts with funding or recognize the fact that these were important posts. Congress was still saying, "Cut back your spending." It was all sort of patchwork.

Q: Well, let's turn to Yugoslavia. This was your first love. Do you talk about your perspective on the situation during this crucial period about the break up of Yugoslavia?

EVANS: I still feel so deeply about it. It is difficult to do. The first task that I had on the Helsinki Commission when I came in, in early 1990, was to monitor elections in Croatia and Slovenia. Then, I went back to monitor elections in Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Macedonia in October. Then, I went back to monitor elections in Montenegro and Serbia in December 1990.

Q: What did you do when you say you monitored elections?

EVANS: These were elections that were forced on the existing Communist structure in Yugoslavia by the events of the times, in which a true opposition, that is a non-Communist opposition, could run. In all but Serbia-Montenegro, the results were that non-Communist parties won. Tudjman who was non-Communist, but is essentially fascist, won in Croatia. Democrats won in Slovenia and in Bosnia. In Herzegovina, a coalition lead by a Muslim party, headed by Izetbegovic won. We met with all these people at the time. We met with Izetbegovic. We met with Milosevic, the whole gang. Serbia and Montenegro, as I say, remained in Communist hands. There was a telling moment when we were in Serbia in December 1990. Warren Zimmerman and I crossed paths again. By that time, he was ambassador to Belgrade. I would have to say that my perception was that Warren and his embassy were somewhat out of touch with the reality of the dynamics of Serbian politics. Warren had immediately gotten off to a very bad relationship with Milosevic, to the point where they hardly spoke to each other, which was unfortunate. The reason was the principled position that Warren took. But pragmatically, I think it was unfortunate. There was virtually no communication or trust, if you can call it that, between the American Embassy and the Serbian Government, and Milosevic, personally. The embassy was projecting that the Democrats, the anti-Milosevic forces would win the election. I, and my colleague from the Helsinki Commission, both spoke Serbian reasonably well. We traveled all over. I looked up some old friends, including my roommate, down in central part of Serbia. The result was, from our testing of the wind, it was very clear that Milosevic was going to win and that he was going to win in a free and fair election. He was the most popular Serbia leader. The opposition, which included the likes of Draskovic, who was a bad, eccentric intellectual, really had no power base outside of the democratic intellectual, more liberal circles in Belgrade. You go down to the countryside and Milosevic was the man. I say this, which may sound somewhat conceited, coming in from Washington for two weeks and coming to a conclusion different from people who were living and working in the embassy. But on the other hand, my feeling is that many cases, when you are in an embassy, you got blinded and caught in a certain bind, constrained by various things. Sometimes the view of embassy people is not all that objective or clear. In any event, I say this by way of background because Milosevic won. He won big. The embassy had to eat crow. This had been apparent to a staffer on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who had gone in and had a similar experience. He had criticized Warren Zimmerman for this. That criticism had found its way into either the Congressional Record or something. Maybe I shouldn't be talking about personalities.

Q: No, it's okay.

EVANS: You can edit this out. Personalities, nevertheless, determine in large cases why things happen or don't happen. In my mind, the failure of Warren Zimmerman and Milosevic to have any full dialogue, prevented the United States, when the chips were down a year later, from being able to work with the reality. The reality was that Milosevic was in charge of Serbia. He was, at that time at least, genuinely popular. He held the reins of power. As I think I mentioned earlier, I had known Milosevic earlier, as a banker. My own feeling is that Milosevic was never the Hitler or Saddam Hussein character that we ended up portraying him to be. To a certain extent, because Milosevic was still a Communist, he was essentially intransigent about the Serbian issue. But mostly because he was a Communist, we branded Milosevic as an evil person. That ended up spiraling out of control, and it was almost a self-fulfilling thing. Milosevic became, in fact, an evil person. Had we had a dialogue, some feeling of trust between our embassy and Milosevic in the horrendous summer of 1991, when events started getting out of control and the Serbs moved into Eastern Croatia, had we been able to talk with the Serbs, had there been some sort of respect on a personal level between the American ambassador and Milosevic, things might have worked out differently. That is what I have to say about that subject.

It was our policy both in Washington and in the embassy, to hold Yugoslavia together. The policy being that we upheld the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, but wanted it to be more democratic. We were not for the breakup of Yugoslavia. Yet, on the other hand, we were pushing for elections. I have to say, quite honestly, the Helsinki Commission, under Dennis DeConcini, was out there in the front, urging a second-round of elections, this time in summer 1991. Yugoslavia brought to a head the conflict within the CSCE principles of respect for territorial integrity, on one hand, and self-determination on the other hand. Whereas, in most cases, and this was enunciated clearly by the greatly respected diplomat and negotiator, Max Kampelman, who said, "Self determination does not mean an end to the respect for territorial integrity." In other words, when the chips are down, we should respect territorial integrity first, then, within that framework, self-determination. For example, in Armenia and Azerbaijan, where the heavily Armenian population in Azerbaijan voted overwhelmingly for independence, the United States did not recognize it. The Armenians were very bitter. Later, when we recognized Croatian and Slovenian independence, because those two republics had voted for independence from Yugoslavia, they said, quite rightly, "Well, this is a double standard." Even before the official German decision in December 1991 to recognize Slovenia and Croatia as independent countries, the United States in the Helsinki Commission, had said, "These republics, Slovenia and Croatia are voting for independence, self-determination. That is what we should honor and respect." For some reason, with Yugoslavia we abandoned the age-old, and time-honored principle that self-determination should not mean the disruption of borders unless it was done peacefully and democratically and in agreement by all parties, but not unilaterally. In the case of Yugoslavia, this principle, cardinal rule, was broken. That was why everything went to hell in a handbasket. Once we recognized the right of Slovenia and Croatia to secede from Yugoslavia, then there was really no turning back. Slovenia could have broken off and it would have been all right. But because of Croatia's geographical facts, because there was a large Serbian population in Croatia, it was impossible for Croatia to break off and for the rest of Yugoslavia simply to go on.

Q: Did you find Senator Robert Dole an important factor, because he had taken a rather strong stand on Bosnia. Did you find him a factor?

EVANS: He did and he was, partly because of some of his staff, and partly because he was very much interested. Talk again, about the personalities! He had gone over to Yugoslavia in the summer of 1990, I think it was, on a CODEL, and had gone down to Kosovo. He had been roughed up by some Serbian police types. My feeling was, that did it, as far as Serbia was concerned for Bob Dole.

Q: We certainly had that feeling here, as I listened to what he was saying.

EVANS: He became the great protector of the Albanians in Kosovo, then, of course, of the Bosnians as the Helsinki Commission had done, which I did not like. Of all the things I thought I contributed to in the time I was with the Helsinki Commission, the major regret I have, and one that I still feel guilty about was this anti-Serb bias. I keep telling myself, "What could I have done?" I could have spoken out more, I suppose. In the break-up of Yugoslavia, I felt that the Helsinki Commission was again becoming blindly anti-Serb: the hatred of Milosevic and the Serbs; the assumption that the Bosnians and the Muslims could do no wrong; and the failure to see what was going to happen. It was almost the feeling that self-determination and anti-Communism, even if it led to the slaughter of thousands of people, was worth it because this was the democratic thing to do. That made me unhappy. The one thing I will say in my defense is the last major trip I took in early 1992. I took two major trips. One was to monitor an independence referendum in Bosnia in February and March of 1992. This was the referendum on the creation of the independent state of Bosnia. I was the senior U.S. official sent out from Washington. My colleague from the Commission and I rented a car and traveled all over that country. I look back on it now, and realize it was a tremendously dangerous thing that we did. We went up into areas of Northern Bosnia where the Serbs were. It was in that area where, eventually, the Omarska Concentration Camp came into being, just four months later. We went down into the southern part. They were extremely primitive Serbs. I must say that they were some of the worst Serbs in Bosnia, from the point of view of being primitive. Anyway, we survived the referendum and the monitoring of the voting.

The evening of the referendum, the results were coming in. First of all, the Serbs, who owned 66% of the country, which is often forgotten, counted for 34% of the population. The referendum itself had been forced down the throat of the Bosnian government which was headed by Izetbegovic, based on this earlier election that I had monitored with the European Community. The Bosnians themselves did not want the referendum because one-third of the population, which controlled two-thirds of the area, was boycotting it. It certainly skewered the legitimacy, I would say, of the referendum. But the West and all the Human Rights crowds, including us, wanted Bosnia to be independent. The results came in. Between the Croats and the Muslim, it was clear that the Muslims were going to head the government. The Croats had about 10% and the Muslims had about 40% of the population.

As the Muslims were beginning to savor their victory, the Serbs started shooting and firing. My driver came into the polling booth where my colleague and I were, and said, "You better come out and get into the car because trouble is starting." We thought, naively, at first, that the shooting was just celebration. But it turned out, it was not. It was the Serbs starting to shoot. We did go back to the hotel. Then all hell broke loose, under Mladic. This was my first encounter with Mladic, not personally, but through his thugs. He clamped down and the result was that all of us, about 200 election monitors who had come in mostly from Europe, were primarily stuck in the famous Holiday Inn in Sarajevo. Now it's early March 1992. The Serbs controlled the airport and were protesting what they saw as a Muslim takeover of their country. Whether or not we agreed with it, or whether it was true or not, this was something we should have taken into account from their point of view. There definitely was a civil war. It was not a war of aggression. These were Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian citizens, who owned their 66% of the land, and they were not about to have some Western inspired referendum put Muslims in charge of their country. That was the issue. Anyway, the situation deteriorated. People were firing. We couldn't even go to the windows of the hotel because they were firing at the hotel.

Finally, we were evacuated. It was very dramatic. Dennis DeConcini tried to reach us. He was worried about what was happening to us. I got calls from Warren Zimmerman. We were effectively cut off. We couldn't get out, all of us. I worked out an arrangement with Warren, whether it was right or wrong, I don't know, but it worked. I told Warren that since the Bosnian government had no forces, the only forces were the Bosnian Serbs, who, of course, had taken over all the Federal Yugoslav arms, tanks and armament, and everything. I said that the only force in existence that is going to get us out of this is the Federal Yugoslav Army. In any event, Warren went to the Foreign Ministry and asked that the Army get us out. The Army did. They flew in a Yugoslav plane from Belgrade and we then went under an armed escort from the hotel to the airport which was held by the Serbs. Again, there were the familiar things that had already started: the roadblocks, the burned out cars, the drunken thugs at checkpoints. There was sporadic shooting and I spent much of the time in the bus hunkered down as low as I could, because I didn't know what was going to come through the windows. Anyway, we got out. That was sort of dramatic. That was in early March. Beginning later in March, the Serbs rose throughout Bosnia, to start what ended up being the liquidation of the Muslims.

My last major trip in the Commission that I was pleased about was my own STAFFDEL (congressional staff delegation) to Georgia, Moldova, and Belarus. In Georgia, we arrived during a revolution and the airport was blocked. The city was under curfew. We had to sleep in the airport when we arrived. There was shooting all over the city. We did meet with Edward Shevardnadze. Then, we went on to Moldova, a neighbor, having trouble with the Transdniester Russians who cut time around General Lebed. We couldn't go there because there was so much shooting. We met with the President of Moldova. Then, we went to Belarus, which was an island of Soviet stability in this seething ferment. It was a difficult time.

In the fall of 1992, on a personal note, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. That rather consumed me. I underwent several months of radiation therapy. That, in a way, took me out of some of the action, of course, with regard to Yugoslavia, with one exception. In August 1992, I was asked by Steny Hoyer to participate in a Congressional staff task force to try to come up with some Congressional resolution that would deal with the Yugoslav thing. I developed, what became a five-point program of applying force. My whole thought was that we were going about this integration of Yugoslavia in an ass-backward way. We were talking about bringing criminals to justice and taking care of the dead and wounded, when the first thing we should be focusing on, was stopping the fighting and shooting. I used an analogy of a burning house, where one of your neighbor's houses is on fire, and you and your neighbors gather around and try to care for the people who keep coming out of the house, burned, and try to argue about who started the fire. Nobody was trying to put the fire out. That was what was infuriating about, not only the United States, but the whole global effort on Yugoslavia. We were simply watching as this was burning, trying to take care of the victims and scratching our heads thinking about what mechanism we could set up to bring the perpetrators, as we define them, to justice, without stopping the god damn killing. The first point was to stop the killing by using force, air strikes, which two or three years later, we resorted to. Had that been done in the beginning, had Milosevic been told, or had somebody like Larry Eagleburger used his influence and either gone over or met with Milosevic in Switzerland or something, and told him to stop this bloody thing right now, and we will go back to the drawing boards and deal with it, something like that. It was extremely frustrating.

Q: Well, David, I think we'll stop at this point. I want to leave you, when this is transcribed, with the option of adding whatever you want.

EVANS: Well, there wasn't much. From the fall of 1992, until I retired in the fall of 1995, unfortunately I was dealing with my cancer problem. I could not travel as much. I was just not involved in issues. Then, in the elections of 1994, the Commission changed and was headed by Republicans. While very fine people, the Republicans did not have Congressman Chris Smith. Senator Alfonso D'Amato simply did not have the same interest. Times had changed. The world had changed, and so the focus of the Helsinki Commission was much different. It was less important, and certainly less engaged in the relevant issues than it was in the hey-days of the 1990, 1991, 1992 period. I retired in October 1995. That really brings it to an end.

End of interview